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THE MEANING OF HISTORY

AND OTHER HISTORICAL PIECES

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BY

FREDERIC HARRISON

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NOTE.

This volume contains a collection of essays designed to stimulate the systematic study of general history. They are (with two exceptions) the permanent and condensed form of historical lectures given in a series of courses at various places of education. The writer has been constantly occupied with the teaching of history since 1862; and the first two chapters of this book were the introduction to a course of lectures given in that year to a London audience. They were printed at the time, but the issue has been long exhausted. The third chapter (which is in effect a Choice of Books of History) and also the fifth chapter (a synthetic survey of the Thirteenth Century) were inaugural lectures given in the New Schools at Oxford to the summer vacation students. The other chapters are based on lectures given by the writer at various times at Newton Hall, Toynbee Hall, the London Institution, and other literary and scientific institutions. Several of these chapters (about half the present volume in bulk) have already appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* and in one or two other periodicals. They have in all cases been carefully revised and partly rewritten; and the author has to express to the Editors and Proprietors of these organs his grateful thanks for the courtesy with which he has been enabled to use them.

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THE MEANING OF HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE USE OF HISTORY.

What is the use of historical knowledge? Is an acquaintance with the events, the men, the ideas of the past, of any real use to us in these days — has it any practical bearing upon happiness and conduct in life?

Two very different answers may be given to this question. The Gradgrinds and the Jack Cades assure us that there is no use at all. We are, they would say with Bacon, the mature age of the world; with us lies the gathered wisdom of ages. To waste our time in studying exploded fallacies, in reproducing worn-out forms of society, or in recalling men who were only conspicuous because they lived amidst a crowd of ignorant or benighted barbarians, is to wander from the path of progress, and to injure and not to improve our understandings.

On the other hand, the commonplace of literary gossip declares that history has fifty different uses. It is amusing to hear what curious things they did in bygone times. Then, again, it is very instructive as a study of character; we see in history the working of the human mind and will. Besides, it is necessary to avoid the blunders they committed in past days: there we collect a store of moral examples, and of political maxims; we learn to watch the signs of the times, and to be prepared for situations whenever they return. And it cannot be doubted, they add, that it is a branch of knowledge, and all knowledge is good. To know history, they conclude, is to be well-informed, is to be familiar with some of the finest examples of elegant and brilliant writing.

Between the two, those who tell us plainly that history is of no use, and those who tell us vaguely that history is of fifty uses, there is not much to choose. We must thoroughly disagree with them both, and of the two we would rather deal with the former. Their opposition, at any rate, is concentrated into a single point, and may be met by a single and a direct answer. To them we may say, Are you consistent? Do you not in practice follow another course? In rejecting all connection with the facts and ideas of the past, are you not cutting the ground from under your own feet? Assume that you are an active politician and a staunch friend of the conservative or liberal party. What are the traditional principles of a party but a fraction, small, no doubt, but a sensible fraction, of history? You believe in the cause of progress. Yet what is the cause of progress but the extension of that civilisation, of that change for the better which we have all witnessed or have learned to recognise as an established fact? Your voice, if you are a politician and a democrat, is on the side of freedom. Well, but do you never appeal to Magna Charta, to the Bill of Rights, to the Reform Acts, to American Independence, or the French Revolution? Or you are an imperialist, and you will suffer no outrage on the good name of England. You are ready to cover the seas with armaments to uphold the national greatness. But what is the high name of England if it is not the memory of all the deeds by which, in peace or war, on sea or land, England has held her own amongst the foremost of the earth?

Nor is it true that we show no honour to the men of the past, are not guided by their ideas, and do not dwell upon their lives, their work, and their characters. The most turbulent revolutionary that ever lived, the most bitter hater of the past, finds many to admire. It may be Cromwell, it may be Rousseau, or Voltaire, it may be Robert Owen, but some such leader each will have; his memory he will revere, his influence he will admit, his principles he will contend for. Thus it will be in every sphere of active life. No serious politician can fail to recognise that, however strongly he repudiates antiquity, and rebels against the tyranny of custom, still he himself only acts freely and consistently when he is following the path trodden by earlier leaders, and is working with the current of the principles in which he throws himself, and in which he has confidence. For him, then, it is not true that he rejects all common purpose with what has gone before. It is a question only of selection and of degree. To some he clings, the rest he rejects. Some history he does study, and finds in it both profit and enjoyment.

Suppose such a man to be interested in any study whatever, either in promoting general education, or eager to acquire knowledge for himself. He will find, at every step he takes, that he is appealing to the authority of the past, is using the ideas of former ages, and carrying out principles established by ancient, but not forgotten thinkers. If he studies geometry he will find that the first text-book put into his hand was written by a Greek two thousand years ago. If he takes up a grammar, he will be only repeating rules taught by Roman schoolmasters and professors. Or is he interested in art? He will find the same thing in a far greater degree. He goes to the British Museum, and he walks into a building which is a good imitation of a Greek temple. He goes to the Houses of Parliament to hear a debate, and he enters a building which is a bad imitation of a mediæval town-hall. Or, again, we know that he reads his Shakespeare and Milton; feels respect for the opinions of Bacon or of Hume, or Adam Smith. Such a man, the moment he takes a warm interest in anything — in politics, in education, in science, in art, or in social improvement — the moment that his intelligence is kindled, and his mind begins to work — that moment he is striving to throw himself into the stream of some previous human efforts, to identify himself with others, and to try to understand and to follow the path of future progress which has been traced out for him by the leaders of his own party or school. Therefore, such a man is not consistent when he says that history is of no use to him. He does direct his action by what he believes to be the course laid out before him; he does follow the guidance of certain teachers whom he respects.

We have then only to ask him on what grounds he rests his selection; why he chooses some and rejects all others; how he knows for certain that no other corner of the great field of history will reward the care of the ploughman, or bring forth good seed. In spite of himself, he will find himself surrounded in every act and thought of life by a power which is too strong for him. If he chooses simply to stagnate, he may, perhaps, dispense with any actual reference to the past; but the moment he begins to act, to live, or to think, he must use the materials presented to him, and, so far as he is a member of a civilised community, so far as he is an Englishman, so far as he is a rational man, he can as little free himself from the influence of former generations as he can free himself from his personal identity; unlearn all that he has learnt; cease to be what his previous life has made him, and blot out of his memory all recollection whatever.

Let us suppose for a moment that any set of men could succeed in sweeping away from them all the influences of past ages, and everything that they had not themselves discovered or produced. Suppose that all knowledge of the gradual steps of civilisation, of the slow process of perfecting the arts of life and the natural sciences, were blotted out; suppose all memory of the efforts and struggles of earlier generations, and of the deeds of great men, were gone; all the landmarks of history; all that has distinguished each country, race, or city in past times from others; all notion of what man had done, or could do; of his many failures, of his successes, of his hopes; suppose for a moment all the books, all the traditions, all the buildings of past ages to vanish off the face of the earth, and with them the institutions of society, all political forms, all principles of politics, all systems of thought, all daily customs, all familiar arts; suppose the most deep-rooted and most sacred of all our institutions gone; suppose that the family and home, property, and justice were strange ideas without meaning; that all the customs which surround us each from birth to death were blotted out; suppose a race of men whose minds, by a paralytic stroke of fate, had suddenly been deadened to every recollection, to whom the whole world was new, — can we imagine a condition of such utter helplessness, confusion, and misery?

Such a race might retain their old powers of mind and of activity, nay, both might be increased tenfold, and yet it would not profit them. Can we conceive such a race acting together, living together, for one hour? They would have everything to create. Would any two agree to adopt the same custom, and could they live without any? They would have all the arts, all the sciences to reconstruct anew; and even their tenfold intellect would not help them there. With minds of the highest order it would be impossible to think, for the world would present one vast chaos; even with the most amazing powers of activity, they would fall back exhausted from the task of reconstructing, reproducing everything around them. Had they the wisest teachers or the highest social or moral purposes, they would all be lost and wasted in an interminable strife, and continual difference; for family, town, property, society, country, nay, language itself, would be things which each would be left to create for himself, and each would create in a different manner. It would realise, indeed, the old fable of the tower of Babel; and the pride of self would culminate in confusion and dispersion. A race with ten times the intellect, twenty times the powers, and fifty times the virtues of any race that ever lived on earth would end, within a generation, in a state of hopeless barbarism; the earth would return to the days of primeval forests and swamps, and man descend almost to the level of the monkey and the beaver.

Now, if this be true, if we are so deeply indebted and so indissolubly bound to preceding ages, if all our hopes of the future depend on a sound understanding of the past, we cannot fancy any knowledge more important than the knowledge of the way in which this civilisation has been built up. If the destiny of our race, and the daily action of each of us, are so completely directed by it, the useful existence of each depends much upon a right estimate of that which has so constant an influence over him; will be advanced as he works with the working of that civilisation, above him, and around him; will be checked as he opposes it; it depends upon this, that he mistakes none of the elements that go to make up that civilisation as a whole, and sees them in their due relation and harmony.

This brings us to that second class of objectors; those who, far from denying the interest of the events of the past, far from seeing no use at all in their study, are only too ready in discovering a multitude of reasons for it, and at seeing in it a variety of incongruous purposes. If they suppose that it furnishes us with parallels when similar events occur, the answer is, that similar events never do and never can occur in history. The history of man offers one unbroken chain of constant change, in which no single situation is ever reproduced. The story of the world is played out like a drama in many acts and scenes, not like successive games of chess, in which the pieces meet, combat, and manœuvre for a time, and then the board is cleared for another trial, and they are replaced in their original positions. Political maxims drawn crudely from history may do more harm than good. You may justify anything by a pointed example in history. It will show you instances of triumphant tyranny and triumphant tyrannicide. You may find in it excuses for any act or any system. What is true of one country is wholly untrue of another. What led to a certain result in one age, leads to a wholly opposite result in another.

Then as to character, if the sole object of studying history is to see in it the workings of the human heart, that is far better studied in the fictitious creations of the great masters of character — in Shakespeare, in Molière, in Fielding, and Scott. Macbeth and Richard are as true to nature as any name in history, and give us an impression of desperate ambition more vivid than the tale of any despot in ancient or modern times. Besides, if we read history only to find in it picturesque incident or subtle shades of character, we run as much chance of stumbling on the worthless and the curious as the noble and the great. A Hamlet is a study in interest perhaps exceeding all others in fiction or in fact, but we shall hardly find that Hamlets have stamped their trace very deep in the history of mankind. There are few lives in all human story more romantic than that of Alcibiades, and none more base. Some minds find fascination in the Popish plots of Titus Oates, where the interest centres round a dastardly ruffian. And the bullies, the fops, the cut-throats, and the Jezebels who crowded the courts of the Stuarts and the Georges, have been consigned to permanent infamy in libraries of learned and of brilliant works.

Brilliant and ingenious writing has been the bane of history; it has degraded its purpose, and perverted many of its uses. Histories have been written which are little but minute pictures of scoundrelism and folly triumphant. Wretches, who if alive now would be consigned to the gallows or the hulks, have only to take, as it is said, a place in history, and generations after generations of learned men will pour over their lives, collect their letters, their portraits, or their books, search out every fact in their lives with prurient inquisitiveness, and chronicle their rascalities in twenty volumes. Such stories, some may say, have a human interest. So has the *Newgate Calendar* a human interest of a certain kind. Brilliant writing is a most delusive guide. In search of an effective subject for a telling picture, men have wandered into strange and dismal haunts. We none of us choose our friends on such a plan. Why, then, should we choose thus the friends round whom our recollections are to centre? We none of us wish to be intimate with a man simply because he is a picturesque-looking villain, nor do we bring to our firesides men who have the reputation of being the loudest braggarts or keenest sharpers of their time.

Let us pass by untouched these memoirs of the unmemorable — these lives of those who never can be said to have lived. Pass them all: these riotings, intrigues, and affectations of worthless men and worthless ages.

Better to know nothing of the past than to know only its follies, though set forth in eloquent language and with attractive anecdote. It does not profit to know the names of all the kings that ever lived, and the catalogue of all their whims and vices, and a minute list of their particular weaknesses, with all their fools, buffoons, mistresses, and valets. Again, some odd incident becomes the subject of the labour of lives, and fills volume after volume of ingenious trifling. Some wretched little squabble is exhumed, unimportant in itself, unimportant for the persons that were engaged in it, trivial in its results. Lives are spent in raking up old letters to show why or how some parasite like Sir T. Overbury was murdered, or to unravel some plot about a maid of honour, or a diamond necklace, or some conspiracy to turn out a minister or to detect some court impostor. There are plenty of things to find out, or, if people are afflicted with a morbid curiosity, there are Chinese puzzles or chess problems left for them to solve, without ransacking the public records and libraries to discover which out of a nameless crowd was the most unmitigated scoundrel, or who it is that must have the credit of being the author of some peculiarly venomous or filthy pamphlet. Why need we have six immense volumes to prove to the world that you have found the villain, and ask them to read all about him, and explain in brilliant language how some deed of darkness or some deed of folly really was done?

And they call this history. This serving up in spiced dishes of the clean and the unclean, the wholesome and the noxious; this plunging down into the charnel-house of the great graveyard of the past, and stirring up the decaying carcases of the outcasts and malefactors of the race. No good can come of such work: without plan, without purpose, without breadth of view, and without method; with nothing but a vague desire to amuse, and a morbid craving for novelty. If there is one common purpose running through the whole history of the past, if that history is the story of man's growth in dignity, and power, and goodness, if the gathered knowledge and the gathered conscience of past ages does control us, support us, inspire us, then is this commemorating these parasites and off-scourings of the human race worse than pedantry or folly. It is filling us with an unnatural contempt for the greatness of the past — nay, it is committing towards our spiritual forefathers the same crime which Ham committed against his father Noah. It is a kind of sacrilege to the memory of the great men to whom we owe all we prize, if we waste our lives in poring over the acts of the puny creatures who only encumbered *their* path.

Men on the battle-field or in their study, by the labour of their brains or of their hands, have given us what we have, and made us what we are ; a noble army who have done battle with barbarism and the powers of nature, martyrs often to their duty ; yet we are often invited to turn with indifference from the story of their long march and many victories, to find amusement amidst the very camp-followers and sutlers who hang upon their rear. If history has any lessons, any unity, any plan, let us turn to it for this. Let this be our test of what is history and what is not, that it teaches us something of the advance of human progress, that it tells us of some of those mighty spirits who have left their mark on all time, that it shows us the nations of the earth woven together in one purpose, or is lit up with those great ideas and those great purposes which have kindled the conscience of mankind.

Why is knowledge of any kind useful ? It is certainly not true that a knowledge of facts, merely as facts, is desirable. Facts are infinite, and it is not the millionth part of them that is worth knowing. What some people call the pure love of truth often means only a pure love of intellectual fussiness. A statement may be true, and yet wholly worthless. It cannot be all facts which are the subject of knowledge. For instance, a man might learn by heart the *Post-Office Directory*, and a very remarkable mental exercise it would be; but he would hardly venture to call himself a well-informed man. No; we want the facts only which add to our power, or will enable us to act. They only give us knowledge — they only are a part of education. For instance, we begin the study of mathematics; of algebra, or geometry. We hardly expect to turn it to practical account like another Hudibras, who could 'tell the clock by algebra'; but we do not find Euclid's geometry help us to take the shortest cut to our own house. Our object is to know something of the simplest principles which underlie all the sciences: to understand practically what mathematical demonstration means: to bring home to our minds the conception of scientific axioms.

Again, we study some of the physical laws of nature — plain facts about gravitation, or heat, or light. What we want is to be able to know something of what our modern philosophers are talking about. We want to know why Faraday is a great teacher; to know what it is which seems to affect all nature equally; which brings us down heavily upon the earth if we stumble, and keeps the planets in their orbits. We want to understand what are laws of nature. We take up such pursuits as botany or geology; but then, again, not in order to discover a new medicine, or a gold-field, or a coal-mine. No, we want to know something of the mystery around us. We see intelligible structure, consistent unity, and common laws in the earth on which we live, with the view, I presume, of feeling more at home in it, of becoming more attached to it, of living in it more happily. Some study physiology. We do not expect to discover the elixir of life, like an eminent novelist, nor do we expect to dispense with the aid of the surgeon. We want to get a glimpse of that marvellous framework of the human form, some notion of the laws of its existence, some idea of the powers which affect it, which depress or develop it, some knowledge of the relation of the thinking and feeling process and the thinking and feeling organ. We seek to know something of the influences to which all human nature is subject, to be able to understand what people mean when they tell us about laws of health, or laws of life, or laws of thought. We want to be in a position to decide for ourselves as to the trustworthiness of men upon whose judgment we depend for bodily existence.

Now, in this list of the subjects of a rational education something is wanting. It is the play of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark : —

'The proper study of mankind is man.'

Whilst Man is wanting, all the rest remains vague, and incomplete, and aimless. Mathematics would indeed be a jumble of figures if it ended in itself. But the moment we learn the influence which some great discovery has had on the destinies of man ; the moment we note how all human thought was lighted up when Galileo said that the sun, and not the earth, was the centre of our world ; the moment we feel that the demonstrations of Euclid are things in which all human minds must agree — indeed, are almost the only things in which all do agree, — that moment the science has a meaning, and a clue, and a plan. It had none so long as it was disconnected from the history and the destiny of man — the past and the future. It is the same with every other science. What would be the meaning of laws of nature, unless by them man could act on nature? What would be the use of knowing the laws of health, unless we supposed that a sounder knowledge of them would ameliorate the condition of men? What, indeed, is the use of the improvement of the mind? It is far from obvious that mere exercise of the intellectual faculties alone is a good. A nation of Hamlets (to take a popular misconception of that character) would be more truly miserable, perhaps more truly despicable, than a nation of Bushmen. By a cultivated mind, a mental training, a sound education, we mean a state of mind by which we shall become more clear of our condition, of our powers, of our duties towards our fellows, of our true happiness, by which we may make ourselves better citizens and better men — more civilised, in short. The preceding studies have been but a preparation. They have been only to strengthen the mind, and give it material for the true work of education — the inculcation of human duty.

All knowledge is imperfect, we may almost say meaningless, unless it tends to give us sounder notions of our human and social interests. What we need are clear principles about the moral nature of man as a social being; about the elements of human society; about the nature and capacities of the understanding. We want landmarks to guide us in our search after worthy guides, or true principles for social or political action. Human nature is unlike inorganic nature in this, that its varieties are greater, and that it shows continual change. The earth rolls round the sun in the same orbit now as in infinite ages past; but man moves forward in a variable line of progress. Age after age develops into new phases. It is a study of life, of growth, of variety. One generation shows one faculty of human nature in a striking degree; the next exhibits a different power. All, it is true, leave their mark upon all succeeding generations, and civilisation flows on like a vast river, gathering up the waters of its tributary streams. Hence it is that civilisation, being not a fixed or lifeless thing, cannot be studied as a fixed or lifeless subject. We can see it only in its movement and its growth. Except for eclipses, some conjunctions of planets, and minor changes, one year is as good as another to the astronomer; but it is not so to the political observer. He must watch successions, and a wide field, and compare a long series of events. Hence it is that in all political, all social, all human questions whatever, history is the main resource of the inquirer.

To know what is most really natural to man as a social being, man must be looked at as he appears in a succession of ages, and in very various conditions. To learn the strength or scope of all his capacities together, he must be judged in most successive periods in which each in turn was best brought out. Let no one suppose that he will find all the human institutions and faculties equally well developed, and all in their due proportion and order, by simply looking at the state of civilisation now actually around us. It is not a monstrous assumption that this world of to-day, so full of misery and discontent, strife and despair, ringing with cries of pain and cries for aid, can really embody forth to us complete and harmonious man? Are there no faculties within him yet fettered, no good instincts stifled, no high yearnings marred? Have we in this year reached the pinnacle of human perfection, lost nothing that we once had, gained all that we can gain? Surely, by the hopes within us, No! But what is missing may often be seen in the history of the past. There, in the long struggle of man upwards, we may watch Humanity in various moods, and see some now forgotten power, capacity, or art yet destined to good service in the future. One by one we may light on the missing links in the chain which connects all races and all ages in one, or gather up the broken threads that must yet be woven into the complex fabric of life.

There is another side on which history is still more necessary as a guide to consistent and rational action. We need to know not merely what the essential qualities of civilisation and of our social nature really are; but we require to know the general course in which they are tending. The more closely we look at it, the more distinctly we see that progress moves in a clear and definite path; the development of man is not a casual or arbitrary motion: it moves in a regular and consistent plan. Each part is unfolded in due order — the whole expanding like a single plant. More and more steadily we see each age working out the gifts of the last and transmitting its labours to the next. More and more certain is our sense of being strong only as we wisely use the materials and follow in the track provided by the efforts of mankind. Everything proves how completely that influence surrounds us. Take our material existence alone. The earth's surface has been made, as we know it, mainly by man. It would be uninhabitable by numbers but for the long labours of those who cleared its primeval forests, drained its swamps, first tilled its rank soil. All the inventions on which we depend for existence, the instruments we use, were slowly worked out by the necessities of man in the childhood of the race. We can only modify or add to these. We could not discard all existing machines and construct an entirely new set of industrial implements.

Take our political existence. There again we are equally confined in limits. Our country as a political whole has been formed for us by a long series of wars, struggles, and common efforts. We could not refashion England, or divide it anew, if we tried for a century. Our great towns, our great roads, the local administrations of our counties, were sketched out for us by the Romans fifteen centuries since. Could we undo it if we tried, and make London a country village, or turn Birmingham into the metropolis? Some people think they could abolish some great institution, such as the House of Lords; but few reformers in this country have proposed to abolish the entire British Constitution. For centuries we endured an archaic law of real property. Such as it was, it was made for us by our feudal ancestors misreading Roman texts. Turn whichever way we will, we shall find our political systems, laws, and administrations to have been provided for us.

The same holds good even more strongly in all moral and intellectual questions. Are we to suppose that whilst our daily life, our industry, our laws, our customs, are controlled by the traditions and materials of the past, our thoughts, our habits of mind, our beliefs, our moral sense, our ideas of right and wrong, our hopes and aspirations, are not just as truly formed by the civilisation in which we have been reared? We are indeed able to transform it, to develop it, and to give it new life and action; but we can only do so as we understand it. Without this all efforts, reforms, and revolutions are in vain. A change is made, but a few years pass over, and all the old causes reappear. There was some unnoticed power which was not touched, and it returns in full force. Take an instance from our own history. Cromwell and his Ironsides, who made the great English Revolution, swept away Monarchy, and Church, and Peers, and thought they were gone forever. Their great chief dead, the old system returned like a tide, and ended in the orgies of Charles and James. The Catholic Church has been, as it is supposed, staggering in its last agonies now for many centuries. Luther believed he had crushed it. Long before his time it seemed nothing but a lifeless mass of corruption. Pope after Pope has been driven into exile. Four or five times has the Church seemed utterly crushed. And yet here in this nineteenth century, it puts forth all its old pretensions, and covers its old territory.

In the great French Revolution it seemed, for once, that all extant institutions had been swept away. That devouring fire seemed to have burnt the growth of ages to the very root. Yet a few years pass, and all reappear — Monarchy, Church, Peers, Jesuits, Empire, and Prætorian guards. Again and again they are overthrown. Again and again they rise in greater pomp and pride. They who, with courage, energy, and enthusiasm too seldom imitated, sixty years ago carried the Reform of Parliament and swept away with a strong hand abuse and privilege, believed that a new era was opening for their country. What would they think now? When they abolished rotten boroughs, and test acts, and curtailed expenditure, little did they think that sixty years would find their descendants wrangling about Church Establishments, appealing to the House of Lords as a bulwark of freedom, and spending ninety millions a year. The experience of every one who was ever engaged in any public movement whatever reminds him that every step made in advance seems too often wrung back from him by some silent and unnoticed power; he has felt enthusiasm give way to despair, and hopes become nothing but recollections.

What is this unseen power which seems to undo the best human efforts, as if it were some overbearing weight against which no man can long struggle? What is this ever-acting force which seems to revive the dead, to restore what we destroy, to renew forgotten watchwords, exploded fallacies, discredited doctrines, and condemned institutions; against which enthusiasm, intellect, truth, high purpose, and self-devotion seem to beat themselves to death in vain? It is the Past. It is the accumulated wills and works of all mankind around us and before us. It is civilisation. It is that power which to understand is strength, which to repudiate is weakness. Let us not think that there can be any real progress made which is not based on a sound knowledge of the living institutions and the active wants of mankind. If we can only act on nature so far as we know its laws, we can only influence society so far as we understand its elements and ways. Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that new principles of policy or social action can be created by themselves or can reconstruct society about us. Those rough maxims, which we are wont to dignify by the name of principles, may be, after all, only crude formulas and phrases without life or power. Only when they have been tested, analysed, and compared with other phases of social life, can we be certain that they are immutable truths. Nothing but a thorough knowledge of the social system, based upon a regular study of its growth, can give us the power we require to affect it. For this end we need one thing above all — we need history.

It may be said — all this may be very useful for statesmen, or philosophers, or politicians; but what is the use of this to the bulk of the people? They are not engaged in solving political questions. The bulk of the people, if they are seeking to live the lives of rational and useful citizens, if they only wish to do their duty by their neighbours, are really and truly politicians. They are solving political problems, and are affecting society very deeply. A man does not need even to be a vestryman, he need not even have one out of the 500,000 votes for London, in order to exercise very great political influence. A man, provided he lives like an honest, thoughtful, truth-speaking citizen, is a power in the state. He is helping to form that which rules the state, which rules statesmen, and is above kings, parliaments, or ministers. He is forming *public opinion.* It is on this, a public opinion, wise, thoughtful, and consistent, that the destinies of our country rest, and not on acts of parliament, or movements, or institutions.

It is sheer presumption to attempt to remodel existing institutions, without the least knowledge how they were formed, or whence they grew; to deal with social questions without a thought how society arose; to construct a social creed without an idea of fifty creeds which have risen and vanished before. Few men would, intentionally, attempt so much; but many do it unconsciously. They think they are not statesmen, or teachers, or philosophers; but, in one sense, they are. In all human affairs there is this peculiar quality. They are the work of the combined labours of many. No statesman or teacher can do anything alone. He must have the minds of those he is to guide prepared for him. They must concur, or he is powerless. In reality, he is but the expression of their united wills and thoughts. Hence it is, I say, that all men need, in some sense, the knowledge and the judgment of the statesman and the social teacher. Progress is but the result of our joint public opinion; and for progress that opinion must be enlightened. 'He only destroys who can replace.' All other progress than this — one based on the union of many minds and purposes, and a true conception of the future and the past — is transitory and delusive. Those who defy this power, the man, the party, or the class who forget it, will be beating themselves in vain against a wall; changing, but not improving; moving, but not advancing; rolling, as the poet says of a turbulent city, like a sick man on the restless bed of pain.

The value of a knowledge of history being admitted, there follows the complicated problem of how to acquire it. There are oceans of facts, mountains of books. This is the question before us. It is possible to know something of history without a pedantic erudition. Let a man ask himself always what he wants to know. Something of man's social nature ; something of the growth of civilisation. He needs to understand something of the character of the great races and systems of mankind. Let him ask himself what the long ages of the early empires did for mankind ; whether they established or taught anything ; if fifty centuries of human skill, labour, and thought were wasted like an autumn leaf. Let him ask himself what the Greeks taught or discovered : why the Romans were a noble race, and how they printed their footmarks so deeply on the earth. Let him ask what was the original meaning and life of those great feudal institutions of chivalry and church, of which we see only the remnants. Let him ask what was the strength, the weakness, and the meaning of the great revolution of Cromwell, or the great revolution in France. A man may learn much true history, without any very ponderous books. Let him go to the museums and see the pictures, the statues, and buildings of Egyptian and Assyrian times, and try to learn what was the state of society under which men in the far East reached so high a pitch of industry, knowledge, and culture, three thousand years before our savage ancestors had learned to use the plough. A man may go to one of our Gothic cathedrals, and, seeing there the stupendous grandeur of its outline, the exquisite grace of its design, the solemn expression upon the faces of its old carved or painted saints, kings, and priests, may ask himself if the men who built that could be utterly barbarous, false-hearted, and tyrannical ; or if the power which could bring out such noble qualities of the human mind and heart must not have left its trace upon mankind.

It does not need many books to know something of the life of the past. A man who has mastered the lives in old Plutarch knows not a little of Greek and Roman history. A man who has caught the true spirit of the Middle Ages knows something of feudalism and chivalry. But is this enough? Far from it. These desultory thoughts must be connected. These need to be combined into a whole, and combined and used for a purpose. Above all, we must look on history as a whole, trying to find what each age and race has contributed to the common stock, and how and why each followed in its place. Looked at separately, all is confusion and contradiction: looked at as a whole, a common purpose appears. The history of the human race is the history of a growth. It can no more be taken to pieces than the human frame can be taken to pieces. Who would think of making anything of the body without knowing whether it possessed a circulation, a nervous system, or a skeleton. History is a living whole. If one organ be removed, it is nothing but a lifeless mass. What we have to find in it is the relation and connection of the parts. We must learn how age develops into age, how country reacts upon country, how thought inspires action, and action modifies thought.

Once conceive that all the greater periods of history have had a real and necessary part to fulfil in creating the whole, and we shall have done more to understand it than if we had studied some portion of it with a microscope. Once feel that all the parts are needed for the whole, and the difficulty of the mass of materials vanishes. We shall come to regard it as a composition or a work of art which cannot be broken up into fragments at pleasure. We should as soon think of dividing it as of taking a figure out of a great picture, or a passage out of a piece of music. We all know those noble choruses of Handel, such as that 'Unto us a child is born,' and have heard the opening notes begin simple, subdued, and slow, until they are echoed back in deeper tones, choir answering to choir, voice joining in with voice, growing fuller and stronger with new and varying bursts of melody, until the whole stream of song swells into one vast tide of harmony, and rolls on abounding, wave upon wave in majestic exultation and power. Something like this complex harmony is seen in the gathering parts of human history, age taking up the falling notes from age, race joining with race in answering strain, until the separate parts are mingled in one, and pour on in one movement together.

There is one mode in which history may be most easily, perhaps most usefully, approached. Let him who desires to find profit in it, begin by knowing something of the lives of great men. Not of those most talked about, not of names chosen at hazard; but of the real great ones who can be shown to have left their mark upon distant ages. Know their lives, not merely as interesting studies of character, or as persons seen in a drama, but as they represent and influence their age. Not for themselves only must we know them, but as the expression and types of all that is noblest around them. Let us know those whom all men cannot fail to recognise as great — the Cæsars, the Charlemagnes, the Alfreds, the Cromwells, great in themselves, but greater as the centre of the efforts of thousands.

We have done much towards understanding the past when we have learned to value and to honour such men. It is almost better to know nothing of history than to know with the narrow coldness of a pedant a record which ought to fill us with emotion and reverence. Our closest friends, our earliest teachers, our parents themselves, are not more truly our benefactors than they. To them we owe what we prize most — country, freedom, peace, knowledge, art, thought, and higher sense of right and wrong. What a tale of patience, courage, sacrifice, and martyrdom is the history of human progress! It affects us as if we were reading in the diary of a parent the record of his struggles for his children. For us they toiled, endured, bled, and died; that we by their labour might have rest, by their thoughts might know, by their death might live happily. For whom did these men work, if not for us? Not for themselves, when they gave up peace, honour, life, reputation itself — as when the great French republican exclaimed, 'May my name be accursed, so that France be free!' not for themselves they worked, but for their cause, for their fellows, for us. Not that they might have fame, but that they might leave the world better than they found it. This supported Milton in his old age, blind, poor, and dishonoured, when he poured out his spirit in solitude, full of grace, tenderness, and hope, amidst the ruin of all he loved and the obscene triumph of all he despised. It supported Dante, the poet of Florence, when an outlaw and an exile he was cast off by friends and countrymen, and wandered about begging his bread from city to city, pondering the great thoughts which live throughout all Europe. This spirit, too, was in one, the noblest victim of the French Revolution, the philosopher Condorcet; who, condemned, hunted to death, devoted the last few days of his life to serene thought of the past, and, whilst the pursuers were on his track, wrote in his hiding-place that noble sketch of the progress of the human race.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONNECTION OF HISTORY.

LET us now try to sketch the outline of this story, link century to century, continent to continent, and judge the share each has in the common work of civilisation. To do so, we must go back to ages long before records began. It is but of the latter and the shorter portion of the duration of progress, that any record has been made or preserved. Yet for a general view, sufficient materials of certain knowledge exist. If we write the biography of a man we do not begin with the year of his life in which his diary opens; we seek to know his parentage, education, and early association. To understand him we must do so. So, too, the biography of mankind must not confine itself to the eras of chronological tables, and of recorded events. In all large instances the civilisation of an epoch or a people has a certain unity in it — their philosophy, their policy, their habits, and their religion must more or less accord, and all depend at last upon the special habit of their minds. It is this central form of belief which determines all the rest. Separately no item which makes up their civilisation as a whole, can be long or seriously changed. It is what a man believes, which makes him act as he does. Thus shall we see that, as their reasoning powers develop, all else develops likewise; their science, their art break up or take new forms; their system of society expands; their life, their morality, and their religion gradually are dissolved and reconstructed.

Let us, then, place ourselves back in imagination at a period when the whole surface of the earth was quite unlike what it is now. Let us suppose it as it was after the last great geologic change — the greater portion of its area covered with primeval forests, vast swamps, dense jungles, moors, prairies, and arid deserts. We must not suppose that the earth had always the same face as now. Such as it is, it has been made by man; the rich pasturages and open plains have all been created by his toil — even the grain, and fruits, and flowers that grow upon its soil have been made what they are by his care. Their originals were what we now should regard as small, valueless, insipid berries or weeds. As yet the now teeming valleys of the great rivers, such as the Nile, or the Euphrates, or the Po, were wildernesses or swamps. The rich meadows of our own island were marshes; where its cornfields stand now, were trackless forests or salt fens. Such countries as Holland were swept over by every tide of the sea, and such countries as Switzerland, and Norway, and large parts of America, or Russia, were submerged beneath endless pine-woods. And through these forests and wastes ranged countless races of animals, many, doubtless, long extinct, in variety and numbers more than we can even conceive.

Where in this terrible world was man? Scanty in number, confined to a few favourable spots, dispersed, and alone, man sustained a precarious existence, not yet the lord of creation, inferior to many quadrupeds in strength, only just superior to them in mind — nothing but the first of the brutes. As are the lowest of all savages now, no doubt even lower, man once was. Conceive what Robinson Crusoe would have been had his island been a dense jungle overrun with savage beasts, without his gun, or his knife, or his knowledge, with nothing but his human hand and his human brain. Ages have indeed passed since then —

at least some twenty thousand years — possibly twice or thrice twenty thousand. But they should not be quite forgotten, and all recollection perish of that dark time when man waged a struggle for life or death with nature. Let us be just to those who fought that fight with the brutes, hunted down and exterminated step by step the races too dangerous to man, and cleared the ground of these monstrous rivals. Every nation has its primeval heroes, whose hearts quailed not before the lion or the dragon: its Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord; its Hercules, whose club smote the serpent Hydra; its Odin, who slew monsters. The forests, moreover, had to be cleared. Step by step man won his way into the heart of those dark jungles; slowly the rank vegetation was swept off, here and there a space was cleared, here and there a plain was formed which left a patch of habitable soil.

Everywhere man began as a hunter, without implements, without clothing, without homes, perhaps without the use of fire. Man's supremacy over the brutes was first asserted when his mind taught him how to make the rude bow, or the flint knife, or to harden clay or wood by heat. But not only were all the arts and uses of life yet to be found, but all the human institutions had to be formed. As yet language, family, marriage, property, tribe, were not, or only were in germ. A few cries assisted by gesture, a casual association of the sexes, a dim trace of parentage or brotherhood, a joint tenure by those who dwelt together, were all that was. Language, as we know it, has been slowly built up, stage after stage, by the instinct of the entire race. Necessity led to new sounds, which use developed; sounds became words, words were worked into sentences, and half-brutish cries grew into intelligible speech. Our earliest teachers were those whose higher instincts first taught men to unite in permanent pairs, to group the children of one home, to form into parties and companies, to clothe themselves, and put checks upon the violent passions. They who first drew savage man out of the life of unbridled instinct and brutal loneliness; who founded the practices of personal decency and cleanliness; who first taught men to be faithful and tender to the young and the old, the woman, and the mother; who first brought these wild hunters together, and made them trust each other and their chief — these were the first great benefactors of mankind; this is the beginning of the history of the race.

When such was the material and moral condition of man, what was his intellectual condition? what were his knowledge, his worship, and his religion? Turn to the earliest traditions of men, to the simple ideas of childhood, and especially to the savage tribes we know, and we have the answer. Man's intellect was far feebler than his activity or his feelings. He knew nothing, he rested in the first imagination. He reasoned on nothing, he supposed everything. He looked upon nature, and saw it full of life, motion, and strength. He knew what struggles he had with it; he felt it often crush him, he felt he could often mould it; and he thought that all, brutes, plants, rivers, storms, forests, and mountains, were powers, living, feeling, and acting like himself. Do not the primeval legends, the fairy tales of all nations, show it to us? Does not the child punish its doll, and the savage defy the thunder, and the horse start at a gnarled oak swaying its boughs like arms in the wind? Man then looked out upon nature, and thought it a living thing — a simple belief which answered all questions. He knew nothing of matter, or elements, or laws. His celestial and his terrestrial philosophy was summed up in this — things act so because they choose. He never asked why the sun or moon rose and set. They were bright beings who walked their own paths when and as they pleased. He never thought why a volcano smoked, or a river overflowed; or thought only that the one was wroth and roared, and that the other had started in fury from his bed.

And what was his religion? What could it but be? Affection for the fruits and flowers of the earth — dread and prostration before the terrible in nature — worship of the bright sun, or sheltering grove, or mountain — in a word, the adoration of nature, the untutored impulse towards the master powers around. As yet nothing was fixed, nothing common. Each worshipped in love or dread what most seized his fancy; each family had its own fetishes; each tribe its stones or mountains; often it worshipped its own dead — friends who had begun a new existence: who appeared to them in dreams, and were thought to haunt the old familiar spots. Such was their religion, the unguided faith of childhood, exaggerating all the feelings and sympathies, stimulating love, and hatred, and movement, and destruction, but leaving everything vague, giving no fixity, no unity, no permanence. In such a condition, doubtless, man passed through many thousand years: tribe struggling with tribe in endless battles for their hunting grounds; often, we may fear, devouring their captives; without any fixed abode, or definite association, or material progress; yet gradually forming the various arts and institutions of life, gradually learning the use of clothes, of metals, of implements, of speech — a race whose life depended solely upon the chase, whose only society was the tribe, whose religion was the worship of natural objects.

In this first struggle with nature, man was not long quite alone. Slowly he won over to his side one or two of the higher animals. This wonderful victory assured his ultimate ascendancy. The dog was won from his wolf-like state to join and aid in the chase. The horse bowed his strength in generous submission to a master. We do not reflect enough upon the efforts that this cost. We are forgetful of the wonders of patience, gentleness, sympathy, sagacity, and nerve, which were required for the first domestication of animals. We may reflect upon the long centuries of care which were needed to change the very nature of these noble brutes, without whom we should indeed be helpless. By degrees the ox, the sheep, the goat, the hog, the camel, and the ass, with horse and dog, were reared by man, formed part of his simple family, and became the lower portion of the tribe. Their very natures, their external forms, were changed. Milk and its compounds formed the basis of food. The hunter's life became less precarious, less rambling, less violent. In short, the second great stage of human existence began, and pastoral life commenced.

With the institution of pastoral — a modified form of nomad — life, a great advance was made in civilisation. Larger tribes could now collect, for there was now no lack of food; tribes gathered into a horde; something like society began. It had its leaders, its elders, perhaps its teachers, poets, and wise men. Men ceased to rove for ever. They stayed upon a favourable pasture for long periods together. Next, property — that is, instruments, valuables, and means of subsistence — began; flocks and herds accumulated; men were no longer torn daily by the wants of hunger; and leisure, repose, and peace were possible. The women were relieved from the crushing toil of the past. The old were no longer abandoned or neglected through want. Reflection, observation, thought began; and with thought, religion. As life became more fixed, worship became less vague and more specific.

Some fixed, great powers alone were adored, chiefly the host of heaven, the stars, the moon, and the great sun itself. Then some elder, freed from toil or war, meditating on the world around him, as he watched the horde start forth at the rising of the sun, the animals awakening and nature opening beneath his rays, first came to think all nature moved at the will of that sun himself, perhaps even of some mysterious power of whom that sun was but the image. From this would rise a regular worship common to the whole horde, uniting them together, explaining their course of life, stimulating their powers of thought.

With this some kind of knowledge commenced. Their vast herds and flocks needed to be numbered, distinguished, and separated. Arithmetic began; the mode of counting, of adding and subtracting, was slowly worked out. The horde's course, also, must be directed by the seasons and the stars. Hence astronomy began. The course of the sun was steadily observed, the recurrence of the seasons noted. Slowly the first ideas of order, regularity, and permanence arose. The world was no longer a chaos of conflicting forces. The earth had its stated times, governed by the all-ruling sun. Now, too, the horde had a permanent existence. Its old men could remember the story of its wanderings and the deeds of its mighty ones, and would tell them to the young when the day was over. Poetry, narrative, and history had begun. Leisure brought the use of fresh implements. Metals were found and worked. The loom was invented; the wheeled car came into use; the art of the smith, the joiner, and the boat-builder. New arts required a subdivision of labour, and division of labour required orderly rule. Society had begun. A greater step was yet at hand. Around some sacred mountain or grave, in some more favoured spot, where the horde would longest halt or oftenest return, some greater care to clear the ground, to protect the pasture, and to tend the plants was shown; some patches of soil were scratched to grow some useful grains, some wild corn ears were cultivated into wheat, the earth began to be tilled. Man passed into the third great stage of material existence, and agriculture began.

Agriculture once commenced, a new era was at hand. Now organised society was possible. We must regard this stage as the greatest effort towards progress ever accomplished by mankind. We must remember how much had to be learnt, how many arts had to be invented, before the savage hunter could settle down into the peaceful, the provident, and the intelligent husbandman. What is all our vaunted progress to this great step? What are all our boasted inventions compared with the first great discoveries of man, the spinning-wheel and loom, the plough, the clay-vessel, the wheel, the boat, the bow, the hatchet, and the forge? Surely, if we reflect, our inventions are chiefly modes of multiplying or saving force; these were the transformations of substances, or the interchange of force. Ours are, for the most part, but expansions of the first idea; these are the creations.

Since it is with agriculture solely that organised society begins, it is with justice that the origin of civilisation is always traced to those great plains where alone agriculture was then possible. It was in the basins of the great Asian rivers, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Indus, the Ganges, the Yang-tse-kiang, and in that of the Nile, that fixed societies began. There, where irrigation is easy, the soil rich, the country open, cultivation arose, and with cultivation of the soil the accumulation of its produce, and with more easy sustenance. leisure, thought, and observation. Use taught man to distinguish between matter and life, man and brute, thought and motion. Men's eyes were opened, and they saw that nature was not alive, and had no will. They watched the course of the sun, and saw that it moved in fixed ways. They watched the sea, and saw that it rose and fell by tides. Then, too, they needed knowledge and they needed teachers. They needed men to measure their fields, their barns, to teach them to build strongly, to calculate the seasons for them, to predict the signs of the weather, to expound the will of the great powers who ruled them. Thus slowly rose the notion of gods, the unseen rulers of these powers of earth and sky — a god of the sea, of the river, of the sky, of the sun ; and between them and their gods rose the first priests; the ministers and interpreters of their will, and polytheism and theocracies began.

Thus simply amidst these great settled societies of the plain began the great human institution, the priesthood — at first only wiser elders who had some deeper knowledge of the arts of settled life. Gradually knowledge advanced ; knowledge of the seasons and of the stars or of astronomy, of enumeration or arithmetic, of measurement or geometry, of medicine and surgery, of building, of the arts, of music, of poetry ; gradually this knowledge became deposited in the hands of a few, was accumulated and transmitted from father to son. The intellect asserted its power, and the rule over a peaceful and industrious race slowly passed into the hands of a priesthood, or an educated and sacred class. These were the men who founded the earliest form of civilised existence ; the most complete, the most enduring, the most consistent of all human societies, the great theocracies of religious societies of Asia and Egypt. Thus for thousands of years before the earliest records of history, in all the great plains of Asia and along the Nile, nations flourished in a high and elaborate form of civilisation. We will examine one only, the best known to us, the type, the earliest and the greatest — the Egyptian.

The task to be accomplished was immense. It was nothing less than the foundation of permanent and organised society. Till this was done all was in danger. All knowledge might be lost, the arts might perish, the civil community might break up. Hitherto there had been no permanence, no union, no system. What was needed was to form the intellectual and material framework of a fixed nation. And this the Egyptian priesthood undertook. The spot was favourable to the attempt. In that great, rich plain, walled off on all sides by the desert or by the sea, it was possible to found a society at once industrial, peaceful, and settled. They needed judges to direct them, teachers to instruct them, men of science to help them, governors to rule them, preachers to admonish them, physicians to heal them, artists to train them, and priests to sacrifice for them. To meet these wants a special order of men spontaneously arose, by whose half-conscious efforts a complete system of society was gradually and slowly formed. In their hands was concentrated the whole intellectual product of ages; this they administered for the common good.

Gradually by their care there arose a system of regular industry. To this end they divided out by their superior skill all the arts and trades of life. Each work was apportioned, each art had its subordinate arts. Then as a mode of perpetuating skill in crafts, to insure a sound apprenticeship of every labour, they caused or enabled each man's work to become hereditary within certain broad limits, and thus created or sanctioned a definite series of castes. To give sanction to the whole, they consecrated each labour, and made each workman's toil a part of his religious duty. Then they organised a scheme of general education. They provided a system of teaching common to all, adapted to the work of each. They provided for the special education of the sacred class in the whole circle of existing knowledge; they collected observations, they treasured up discoveries, and recorded events. Next they organised a system of government. They established property, they divided out the land, they set up landmarks, they devised rules for its tenure, they introduced law, and magistrates, and governors; provinces were divided into districts, towns, and villages; violence was put down, a strict police exercised, regular taxes imposed. Next they organised a system of morality; the social, the domestic, and the personal duties were minutely defined; practices relating to health, cleanliness, and temperance were enforced by religious obligations: every act of life, every moment of existence, was made a part of sacred duty. Lastly, they organised national life by a vast system of common religious rites, having imposing ceremonies which awakened the imagination and kindled the emotions, bound up the whole community into an united people, and gave stability to their national existence, by the awful sense of a common and mysterious belief.

If we want to know what such a system of life was like, let us go into some museum of Egyptian antiquities, where we may see representations of their mode of existence carved upon their walls. There we may see nearly all the arts of life as we know them — weaving and spinning, working in pottery, glass-blowing, building, carving, and painting; ploughing, sowing, threshing, and gathering into barns; boating, irrigation, fishing, wine-pressing, dancing, singing, and playing — a vast community, in short, orderly, peaceful, and intelligent; capable of gigantic works and of refined arts, before which we are lost in wonder; a civilised community busy and orderly as a hive of bees, amongst whom every labour and function was arranged in perfect harmony and distinctness: all this may be seen upon monuments 5000 years old.

Here, then, we have civilisation itself. All the arts of life had been brought to perfection, and indelibly implanted on the mind of men so that they could never be utterly lost. All that constitutes orderly government, the institutions of society, had been equally graven into human existence. A check had been placed upon the endless and desultory warfare of tribes; and great nations existed. The ideas of domestic life, marriage, filial duty, care for the aged and the dead, had become a second nature. The wholesome practices of social life, of which we think so lightly, had all been invented and established. The practice of regular holidays, social gatherings, and common celebrations began — the record and division of past ages, the exact times of the seasons, of the year, the months and its festivals; the great yet little-prized institution of the week. Nor were the gains to thought less. In the peaceful rolling on of those primeval ages, observations had been stored up by an unbroken succession of priests, without which science never would have existed. It was no small feat in science first to have determined the exact length of the year. It needed observations stretching over a cycle of 1500 years. But the Egyptian priests had enumerated the stars, and could calculate for centuries in advance the times of their appearance. They possessed the simpler processes of arithmetic and geometry; they knew something of chemistry, and much of botany, and even a little of surgery. There was one invention yet more astonishing; the Egyptians invented, the Phœnicians popularised, the art of writing, and transmitted the alphabet — our alphabet — to the Greeks. A truly amazing intellectual effort was required for the formation of the alphabet; not to shape the forms, but first to conceive that the complex sounds we utter could be classified, and reduced down to those simple elements we call the letters. We can imagine hardly any effort of abstract thought more difficult than this, and certainly none more essential to the progress of the human mind.

They had indeed great minds who did all this; for they did not so much promote civilisation as create it. Never perhaps before or since has any order of men received this universal culture; never perhaps has any order shown this many-sided activity and strength. Never before or since has such power been concentrated in the same hands — the entire moral and material control over society. They had great minds, great souls also, who could conceive and carry through such a task — greater perhaps in this that they did not care to celebrate themselves for posterity, but passed away when their work was done, contented to have seen it done, as Moses did when he went up alone to die in secret, that no man might know or worship at his tomb. The debt we owe these men and these times is great. It is said that man learns more in the first year of his childhood than in any year subsequently of his life. And in this long childhood of the world, how many things were learnt! Is it clear that they could have been learnt in any other way? Caste, in its decline, is the most degrading of human institutions. It is doubtful if without it the acts of life could have been taught and preserved in those unsettled ages of war and migration. We rebel justly against all priestly tyranny over daily life and customs. It is probable that without these sanctions of religion and law, the rules of morality, of decency, and health could never have been imposed upon the lawless instincts of mankind. We turn with repugnance from the monotony of those unvarying ages, and of that almost stagnant civilisation; but are we sure that without it, it would have been possible to collect the observations of distant ages, and the records of dynasties and eras on which all science and all history rest? would it have been possible to provide a secure and tranquil field in which the slow growth of language, art, and thought could have worked out, generation after generation, their earliest and most difficult result?

No form of civilisation has ever endured so long; its consequences are stamped deeply still upon our daily life; yet the time came when even these venerable systems must die.

Their work was done, and it was time for them to pass away. Century after century had gone by, teaching the same lessons, but adding nothing knew. Human life began to be stifled in these primeval forms. The whole empire of the priests grew evil and corrupt. We know them chiefly in their decline, when kings and conquerors had usurped and perverted the patient energies of these long-tutored peoples. These great societies passed from industrial and social communities into stupendous tyrannies, made up of cruelty and pride. It was the result of the great and fatal error which lay beneath the whole priestly system. They had misconceived their strength and their knowledge. They had undertaken to organise society whilst their own knowledge was feeble and imperfect. They had tried to establish the rule of mind, of all rules the most certainly destined to fail; and they based that rule upon error and misconception. They pretended to govern society instead of confining themselves to the only possible task, to teach it. They who had begun by securing progress, now were its worst obstacles. They who began to rule by the right of intelligence, now dreaded and crushed intelligence. They fell as every priesthood has fallen which has ever based its claims upon imperfect knowledge, or pretended to command in the practical affairs of life. Yet there was only one way in which the nightmare of this intellectual and social oppression could be shaken off, and these strong systems broken up. It was no doubt by the all-powerful instinct of conquest, and by the growth of vast military monarchies, that the change was accomplished. Those antique societies of peace and industry degenerated at last into conquering empires ; and, during the thousand years which precede the Persian empire, Asia was swept from side to side by the armies of Assyrian, Median, Babylonian, and Egyptian conquerors. Empire after empire rose and fell with small result, save that they broke the death-like sleep of ages, and brought distant people from the ends of the earth into contact with each other.

The researches and discoveries of our own generation have thrown much light on these Asiatic kingdoms, and many names and events have been sufficiently identified. But no regular and authentic history of the tracts enclosed between the Black Sea, the Caspian, the Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf has yet become possible ; nor has our general conception of the civilisation of these Asiatic monarchies been modified in essential features. From time to time we find traces of efforts made by independent peoples, Arabs, Syrians, Phœnicians, and Jews, to free themselves from the pressure of the *régime* of caste and of the military empires. Of these efforts the Jewish nationality is, from the moral and spiritual point of view, far the most important. From the practical and material point of view, the most important is undoubtedly the Phœnician. These two most interesting peoples may be traced for eight or ten centuries before they were both absorbed in the Persian empire, making heroic and persevering efforts to found a new type of society, or to develop the arts and resources of civilised life. The Jewish nation, though its subsequent influence on the conscience and imagination of mankind has made it of such transcendant interest to us in a later age, was too small, too feebly seated, and with too little of practical genius, to produce any decisive effect on the general course of civil organisation.

That very remarkable people, the Phœnicians, did more to that end. Their wonderful enterprise and indomitable nature, their seats on the shores of the Mediterranean and the possession of maritime strongholds, with their unique aptitude for the sea in the early ages, enabled them to play a most important part in the evolution of human civilisation. They did what Venice did in the Middle Ages and Holland in subsequent times. They carried the arts, inventions, and products of the various continents and zones of climate over the whole known world from Britain to Ceylon. But they were too much dispersed, too mobile, and too defective in military and political genius to confront a great empire, and they successively fell before the Assyrian, Babylonish, and Egyptian conquerors. Their arts, their trade, their naval supremacy, passed to the inhabitants of Western seaboards, islands, and more sheltered bays.

The world seemed in danger of perishing by exhaustion. It needed a new spirit to revive it. But now another race appears upon the scene; a branch of that great Aryan people, who from the high lands of central Asia have swept over Assyria, India, and Europe, the people who as Greeks, Romans, Gauls, or Teutons have been the foremost of mankind, of whom we ourselves are but a younger branch. Now, too, the darkness which covered those earlier ages of the world rolls off: accurate history begins, and the drama proceeds in the broad light of certainty.

It is about 550 B.C. that the first great name in general history appears. Cyrus founds the Persian empire. For ages, along the mountain slopes between the Hindoo Koosh and the Caspian Sea, the Persian race had remained a simple horde of wandering herdsmen, apart from the vast empires of Babylon and Nineveh in the plains below. There they grew up with nobler and freer thoughts, not crushed by the weight of a powerful monarchy, not degraded by decaying superstitions, nor enervated by material riches. They honoured truth, freedom, and energy. They had faith in themselves and their race. They valued morality more than ceremonies. They believed in a Supreme Power of the universe. Just as the northern nations afterwards poured over the Roman empire, so these stronger tribes were preparing to descend upon the decaying remains of the Asiatic empires. They needed only a captain, and they found one worthy of the task in the great King Cyrus.

Marshalling his mountain warriors into a solid army, Cyrus swept down upon the plains, and one by one the empires fell before him, until from the Mediterranean to the Indus, from Tartary to the Arabian Gulf, all Asia submitted to his sway. His successors continued his work, pushing across Arabia, Egypt, Africa, and Northern Asia itself. There over that enormous tract they built up the Persian monarchy, which swallowed up and fused into one so many ancient empires. The conquerors were soon absorbed, like the Northmen, into the theocratic faith and life of the conquered; and throughout half of the then inhabited globe one rule, one religion, one system of life alone existed. But the Persian kings could not rest whilst a corner remained unconquered. On the shores of the Mediterranean they had come upon a people who had defied them with strange audacity. Against them the whole weight of the Asian empire was put forth. For ten years fleets and armies were preparing. There came archers from the wastes of Tartary and the deserts of Africa; charioteers from Nineveh and Babylon; horsemen, clubmen, and spearmen; the mailclad footmen of Persia; the fleets of the Phœnicians; all the races of the East gathered in one vast host, and, as legend said, 5,000,000 men and 2000 ships poured over the Eastern seas upon the devoted people.

And who were they who seemed thus doomed? Along the promontories and islands of the eastern Mediterranean there dwelt the scattered race whom we call Greeks, who had gradually worked out a form of life totally differing from the old, who had wonderfully expanded the old arts of life and modes of thought. With them the destinies of the world then rested for all its future progress. With them all was life, change, and activity. Broken into sections by infinite bays, mountains, and rivers, scattered over a long line of coasts and islands, the Greek race, with natures as varied as their own beautiful land, as restless as their own seas, had never been moulded into one great solid empire, and early threw off the weight of a ruling caste of priests. No theocracy or religious system of society ever could establish itself amidst a race so full of life and motion, exposed to influences from without, divided within. They had borrowed the arts of life from the great Eastern peoples, and, in borrowing, had wonderfully improved them. The alphabet, shipbuilding, commerce, they had from the Phœnicians; architecture, sculpture, painting, from the Assyrian or Lydian empires. Geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, they had borrowed from the Egyptians. The various fabrics, arts, and appliances of the East came to them in profusion across the seas. Their earliest lawgivers, rulers, and philosophers had all travelled through the great Asian kingdom, and came back to their small country with a new sense of all the institutions and ideas of civilised life.

The Greeks borrowed, they did not imitate. Alone as yet, they had thrown off the tyranny of custom, of caste, of kingcraft, and of priestcraft. They only had moulded the ponderous column and the uncouth colossus of the East into the graceful shaft and the lifelike figure of the gods. They only had dared to think freely, to ask themselves what or whence was this earth, to meet the problems of abstract thought, to probe the foundations of right and wrong. Lastly, they alone had conceived the idea of a people not the servants of one man or of a class, not chained down in a rigid order of submission, but the free and equal citizens of a republic; for on them first had dawned the idea of a civilised community in which men should be not masters and slaves, but brothers.

On poured the myriads of Asia, creating a famine as they marched, drying up the streams, and covering the seas with their ships. Who does not know the tale of that immortal effort? — how the Athenians armed old and young, burned their city, and went on board their ships — how for three days Leonidas and his three hundred held the pass against the Asian host, and lay down, each warrior at his post, calmly smiling in death — how the Greek ships lay in ambush in their islands, for the mighty fleet of Persia — how the unwieldy mass was broken and pierced by its dauntless enemy — how, all day, the battle raged beneath the eyes of the great king himself, and, at its close, the seas were heaving with the wrecks of the shattered host. Of all the battles in history, this one of Salamis was the most precious to the human race. No other tale of war can surpass it. For in that war the heroism, the genius, the marvellous audacity shown by these pigmy fleets and armies of a small, weak race, withstood and crushed the entire power of Asia, and preserved from extinction the life and intellect of future ages.

Victory followed upon victory, and the whole Greek race expanded with this amazing triumph. The old world had been brought face to face with the intellect which was to transform it. The Greek mind, with the whole East open to it, exhibited inexhaustible activity. A century sufficed to develop a thoroughly new phase of civilisation. They carried the arts to a height whereon they stand as the types for all time. In poetry they exhausted and perfected every form of composition. In politics they built up a multitude of communities, rich with a prolific store of political and social institutions. Throughout their stormy history stand forth great names. Now and then there rose amongst them leaders of real genius. For a time they showed some splendid instances of public virtue, of social life, patriotism, elevation, sagacity, and energy. For a moment Athens at least may have believed that she had reached the highest type of political existence. But with all this activity and greatness there was no true unity. Wonderful as was their ingenuity, their versatility and energy, it was too often wasted in barren struggles and wanton restlessness. For a century and a half after the Persian invasion, the petty Greek states contended in one weary round of contemptible civil wars and aimless revolutions. One after another they cast their great men aside, to think out by themselves the thoughts that were to live for all time, and gave themselves up to be the victims of degraded adventurers. For one moment only in their history, if indeed for that, they did become a nation. At last, wearied out by endless wars and constant revolutions, the Greek states by force and fraud were fused in one people by the Macedonian kings; and by Macedon, instead of by true Hellas, the great work so long postponed, but through their history never forgotten, was at length attempted — the work of avenging the Persian invasion, and subduing Asia.

Short and wonderful was that career of conquest, due wholly to one marvellous mind. Alexander, indeed, in military and practical genius seems to stand above all Greeks, as Cæsar above all Romans; they two the greatest chiefs of the ancient world. No story in history is so romantic as the tale of that ten years of victory when Alexander, at the head of some thirty thousand veteran Greeks, poured over Asia, crushing army after army, taking city after city, and receiving the homage of prince after prince, himself fighting like a knight-errant: until, subduing the Persian empire, and piercing Asia from side to side, and having reached even the great rivers of India, he turned back to Babylon to organise his vast empire, to found new cities, pour life into the decrepit frame of the East, and give to these entranced nations the arts and wisdom of Greece. For this he came to Babylon, but came thither only to die. Endless confusion ensued; province after province broke up into a separate kingdom, and the vast empire of Alexander became the prey of military adventurers.

Yet, though this creation of his genius, like so much else that Greece accomplished, was, indeed, in appearance a disastrous failure, still it had not been in vain. The Greek mind was diffused over the East like the rays of the rising sun when it revives and awakens slumbering nature. The Greek language, the most wonderful instrument of thought ever composed by man, became common to the whole civilised world; it bound together all educated men from the Danube to the Indus. The Greek literature, poetry, history, science, philosophy, and art were at once the common property of the empire. The brilliance, the audacity, the strength of the Greek reasoning awoke the dormant powers of thought. The idea of laws, the idea of states, the idea of citizenship, came like a revelation upon the degenerate slaves of the Eastern tyrannies. Nor was the result less important to the Greek mind itself. Now, at last, the world was open without obstacle. The philosophers poured over the new empire; they ransacked the records of primeval times; they studied the hoarded lore of the Egyptian and Chaldean priests. Old astronomical observations, old geometric problems, long concealed, were thrown open to them. They travelled over the whole continent of Asia, studying its wonders of the past, collecting its natural curiosities, examining its surface, its climates, its production, its plants, its animals, and its human races, customs, and ideas. Lastly, they gathered up and pondered over the half-remembered traditions and the half-comprehended mysteries of Asian belief: the conceptions which had risen up before the intense abstraction of Indian and Babylonian mystics, Jewish and Egyptian prophets and priests; the notion of some great principle or thought, or Being, utterly unseen and unknown, above all gods, and without material form. Thus arose the earliest germ of that spirit which, by uniting Greek logic with Chaldean or Jewish imagination, prepared the way for the religious systems of Mussulman and Christian.

Such was the result of the great conquest of Alexander. Not by its utter failure as an empire are we to judge it; not by the vices and follies of its founder, nor the profligate orgies of its dissolution, must we condemn it. We must value it as the means whereby the effete world of the East was renewed by the life of European thought, by which arose the first ideas of nature as a whole and of mankind as a whole, by which the ground was first prepared for the Roman empire, and for Christian and Mahometan religion.

As a nation the Greeks had established little that was lasting. They had changed much; they had organised hardly anything. As the great Asian system had sacrificed all to permanence, so the Greek sacrificed all to movement. The Greeks had created no system of law, no political order, no social system. If civilisation had stopped there, it would have ended in ceaseless agitation, discord, and dissolution. Their character was wanting in self-command and tenacity, and their genius was too often wasted in intellectual licence. Yet if politically they were unstable, intellectually they were great. The lives of their great heroes are their rich legacy to all future ages; Solon, Themistocles, Pericles, Epaminondas, and Demosthenes stand forth as the types of bold and creative leaders of men. The story of their best days has scarcely its equal in history. In art they gave us the works of Phidias, the noblest image of the human form ever created by man. In poetry, the models of all time — Homer, the greatest and the earliest of poets; Æschylus, the greatest master of the tragic art; Plato, the most eloquent of moral teachers; Pindar, the first of all in lyric art. In philosophy and in science the Greek mind laid the foundations of all knowledge, beyond which, until the last three centuries, very partial advance had been made. Building on the ground prepared by the Egyptians, they did much to perfect arithmetic, raised geometry to a science by itself, and invented that system of astronomy which served the world for fifteen centuries. In knowledge of animal life and the art of healing they constructed a body of accurate observations and sound analysis; in physics, or the knowledge of the material earth, they advanced to the point at which little was added till the time of Bacon himself.

In abstract thought their results were still more surprising. All the ideas that lie at the root of our modern abstract philosophy may be found in germ in Greece. The schools of modern metaphysics are the development of conceptions vaguely grasped by them. They analysed with perfect precision and wonderful minuteness the processes employed in language and in reasoning; they systematised grammar and logic, rhetoric and music; they correctly analysed the human mind, the character, the emotions, and founded the science of morality and the art of education; they correctly analysed the elements of society and political life, and initiated the science of politics, or the theory of social union. Lastly, they criticised and laid bare all the existing beliefs of mankind; pierced the imposing falsehood of the old religions; meditated on all the various answers ever given to the problem of human destiny, of the universe and its origin, and slowly worked out the conception of unity through the whole visible and invisible universe, which, in some shape or other, has been the belief of man for twenty centuries. Such were their gifts to the world. It was an intellect active, subtle, and real, marked by the true scientific character of freedom, precision, and consistency. And, as the Greek intellect overtopped the intellect of all races of men, and combined in itself the gifts of all others, so were the great intellects of Greece all overtopped and concentrated in one great mind — the greatest, doubtless, of all human minds — the matchless Aristotle; as the poet says, 'the master of those who know,' who, in all branches of human knowledge, built the foundations of abiding truth.

Let us pause for moment to reflect what point we have reached in the history of civilisation. Asia had founded the first arts and usages of material life, begun the earliest social institutions, and taught us the rudiments of science and of thought. Greece had expanded all these in infinite variety and subtlety, had instituted the free state, and given life to poetry and art, had formed fixed habits of accurate reasoning and of systematic observation. Materially and intellectually civilisation existed. Yet in Greece we feel that, socially, everything is abortive. The Greeks had not grown into a united nation. They split into a multitude of jealous republics. These republics split into hostile and restless factions. And when the genius of the Macedonian kings had at last founded an empire, it lasted but twenty years, and gave place to even more colossal confusion. All that we associate with true national existence was yet to come, but the noble race who were to found it had long been advancing towards their high destiny. Alexander, perhaps, had scarcely heard of that distant, half-educated people, who for four centuries had been slowly building up the power which was to absorb and supersede his empire.

Far beyond the limits of his degenerate subjects, worthier successors of his genius were at hand: the Romans were coming upon the world. The Greeks founded the city, the Romans the nation. The Greeks were the authors of philosophy, the Romans of government, justice, and peace. The Greek ideal was thought, the Roman ideal was law. The Greeks taught us the noble lesson of individual freedom, the Romans the still nobler lesson, the sense of social duty. It is just, therefore, that to the Romans, as to the people who alone throughout all ages gave unity, peace, and order to the civilised world, who gave us the elements of our modern political life, and have left us the richest record of public duty, heroism, and self-sacrifice — it is just that to them we assign the place of the noblest nation in ancient history. That which marks the Roman with his true greatness was his devotion to the social body, his sense of self-surrender to country : a duty to which the claims of family and person were implicitly to yield ; which neither death, nor agony, nor disgrace could subdue ; which was the only reward, pleasure, or religion which a true citizen could need. This was the greatness, not of a few leading characters, but of an entire people during many generations. The Roman state did not give merely examples of heroes — it was formed of heroes ; nor were they less marked by their sense of obedience, submission to rightful authority where the interest of the state required it, submission to order and law.

Nor were the Romans without a deep sense of justice. They did not war to crush the conquered ; once subdued, they dealt with them as their fellows, they made equal laws and a common rule for them ; they bound them all into the same service of their common country. Above all other nations in the world they believed in their mission and destiny. From age to age they paused not in one great object. No prize could beguile them, no delusion distract them. Each Roman felt the divinity of the Eternal City, destined always to march onwards in triumph : in its service every faculty of his mind was given ; life, wealth, and rest were as nothing to this cause. In this faith they could plan out for the distant future, build up so as to prepare for vast extension, calculate far distant schemes, and lay stone by stone the walls of an enduring structure. Hence throughout the great age each Roman was a statesman, for he needed to provide for the future ages of his country ; each Roman was a citizen of the world, for all nations were destined to be his fellow-citizens ; each Roman could command, for he had learnt to obey, and to know that he who commands and he who obeys are but the servants of one higher power — their common fatherland.

Long and stern were the efforts by which this power was built up. Deep as is the mystery which covers the origin of Rome, we can still trace dimly how, about the centre of the Italian peninsula, along the banks of the Tiber, fragments of two tribes were fused by some heroic chieftain into one; the first more intellectual, supple, and ingenious, the second more stubborn, courageous, and faithful. We see more clearly how this compound people rose through the strength of these qualities of mind and character to be the foremost of the neighbouring tribes; how they long maintained that religious order of society which the Greeks so early shook off; how it moulded all the institutions of their life, filled them with reverence for the duties of family, for their parents, their wives, for the memory and the spirit of their dead ancestors, taught them submission to judges and chiefs, devotion to their mother-city, love for her commands, her laws, and her traditions, trained them to live and die for her — indeed, compassed their whole existence with a sense of duty towards their fellows and each other; how this sense of social duty grew into the very fibres of their iron natures, kept the state through all dangers rooted in the imperishable trust and instinct of a massive people; then how this well-knit race advanced step by step upon their neighbouring tribes, slowly united them in one, gave them their own laws, made them their own citizens; step by step advanced upon the only civilised nation of the peninsula, the theocratic society of Etruria, took from them the arts of war and peace; how the hordes of Northern barbarians poured over the peninsula like a flood, sweeping all the nations below its waters, and when they emerged, Rome only was left strong and confident; how, after four centuries of constant struggle, held up always by the sense of future greatness, the Romans had at length absorbed one by one the leading nations of Italy, and by one supreme effort, after thirty years of war, had crushed their noblest and strongest rivals, their equals in all but genius and fortune, and stood at last the masters of Italy, from shore to shore.

Soon came the great crisis of their history, the long wars of Rome and Carthage. On one side was the genius of war, empire, law, and art, on the other the genius of commerce, industry, and wealth. The subjects of Carthage were scattered over the Mediterranean, the power of Rome was compact. Carthage fought with regular mercenaries, Rome with her disciplined citizens. Carthage had consummate generals, but Rome had matchless soldiers. Long the scale trembled. Not once nor twice was Rome stricken down to the dust. Punic fleets swept the seas. African horsemen scoured the plains. Barbarian hordes were gathered up by the wealth of Carthage, and marshalled by the genius of her great captain. For her fought the greatest military genius of the ancient world, perhaps of all time. Hannibal, himself a child of the camp, training a veteran army in the wars of Spain, led his victorious troops across Gaul, crossed the Alps, poured down upon Italy, struck down army after army, and at last, by one crowning victory, scattered the last military force of Rome. Beset by an invincible army in the heart of Italy, her strongholds stormed, without generals or armies, without money or allies, without cavalry or ships, it seemed that the last hour of Rome was come. Now, if ever, she needed that faith in her destiny, the solid strength of her slow growth, and the energy of her entire people. They did not fail her. In her worst need her people held firm, her senate never lost heart, armies grew out of the very remnants and slaves within her walls. Inch by inch the invader was driven back, watched and besieged in turn. The genius of Rome revived in Scipio. He it was who, with an eagle's sight, saw the weakness of her enemy, swooped, with an eagle's flight, upon Carthage herself, and at last, before her walls, overthrew Hannibal, and with him the hopes and power of his country and his race.

It is in these first centuries that we see the source of the greatness of Rome. Then was founded her true strength. What tales of heroism, dignity, and endurance have they not left us ! There are no types of public virtue grander than these. Brutus condemning his traitor sons to death ; Horatius defending the bridge against an army ; Cincinnatus taken from the plough to rule the state, returning from ruling the state again to the plough ; the Decii, father and son, solemnly devoting themselves to death to propitiate the gods of Rome ; Regulus the prisoner going to his home only to exhort his people not to yield, and returning calmly to his prison ; Cornelia offering up her children to death and shame for the cause of the people ; great generals content to live like simple yeomen ; old and young ever ready to march to certain death ; hearts proof against eloquence, gold, or pleasure ; noble matrons training their children to duty ; senates ever confident in their country ; generals returning from conquered nations in poverty ; the leader of triumphant armies becoming the equal of the humblest citizens.

Carthage once overcome, the conquest of the world followed rapidly. Spain and the islands of the Mediterranean Sea were the prizes of the war. Lower Gaul, Greece, and Macedon were also within fifty years incorporated in Rome. She pushed further. The whole empire of Alexander fell into her hands, and at length, after seven hundred years of conquest, she remained the mistress of the civilised world. But, long before this, she herself had become the prey of convulsions. The marvellous empire, so rapidly expanded, had deeply corrupted the power which had won it. Her old heroes were no more. Her virtues failed her, and her vast dominions had long become the prize of bloody and selfish factions. The ancient republic, whose freemen had once met to consult in the Forum, broke up in the new position for which her system was utterly unfit.

For nearly a century the great empire had inevitably tended towards union in a single centre. One dictator after another had possessed and misused the sovereign power. At last it passed to the worthiest, and the rule over the whole ancient world came to its greatest name, the noble Julius Cæsar. In him were found more than the Roman genius for government and law, with a gentleness and grace few Romans ever had ; an intellect truly Greek in its love of science, of art, in reach and subtlety of thought ; and, above all this, in spite of vices and passions which he shared with his age, a breadth of view and heart, a spirit of human fellowship and social progress, peculiar to one who was the friend of men of different races, countries, and ideas. Julius was consummate general, orator, poet, historian, ruler, lawgiver, reformer, and philosopher ; in the highest sense the statesman, magnanimous, provident, laborious, large-hearted, affable, resolute, and brave. With him the Roman empire enters on a new and better phase. He first saw and showed how this vast aggregate of men must be ruled no longer as the subjects of one conquering city, but as a real and single state governed in the interest of all, with equal rights and common laws ; and Rome be no longer the mistress, but the leader only of the nations. In this spirit he broke with the old Roman temper of narrow nationality and pride ; raised to power and trust new men of all ranks and of all nations ;

opened the old Roman privileges of citizenship to the new subjects; laboured to complete and extend the Roman law; reorganised the administration of the distant provinces; and sought to extinguish the trace of party fury and hatred.

When the selfish rage of the old Roman aristocracy had struck him down before his work was half complete, yet his work did not perish with him. The Roman empire at last rose to the level which he had planned for it. For some two centuries it did succeed in maintaining an era of progress, peace, and civilisation — a government, indeed, at times frightfully corrupt, at times convulsed to its foundations, yet in the main in accordance with the necessities of the times, and rising in its highest types to wise, tranquil, and prudent rule, embracing all, open to all, just to all, and beloved by all. Then it was, during those two centuries, broken as they were by temporary convulsions, that the nations of Europe rose into civilised life. Then the Spaniard, the Gaul, the Briton, the German, the people that dwelt along the whole course of the Rhine and the Danube, first learnt the arts and ideas of life; law, government, society, education, industry, appeared amongst them; and over the tracts of land trodden for so many centuries by rival tribes and devastating hordes, security first appeared, turmoil gave place to repose, and there rose the notion, not forgotten for ten centuries, of the solemn Peace of Rome.

Let us recount what it was that the Roman had given to the world. In the first place, his law — that Roman law, the most perfect political creation of the human mind, which for one thousand years grew with one even and expanding life — the law which is the basis of all the law of Europe, including even our own. Then the political system of towns. The actual municipal constitution of the old cities of Western Europe, from Gibraltar to the Baltic, from the Channel to Sicily, is but a development of the Roman city, which lasted through the Middle Ages, and began modern industrial life. Next, all the institutions of administration and police which modern Europe has developed had their origin there. To them in the Middle Ages men turned when the age of confusion was ending. To them again men turned when the Middle Ages themselves were passing away. The establishment of elective assemblies, of graduated magistracies, of local and provincial justice, of public officers and public institutions, free museums, baths, theatres, libraries, and schools — all that we understand by organised society, in a word, may be traced back to the Empire. Throughout all Western Europe, from that germ, civilisation arose and raised its head after the invasion of the Northern tribes. From the same source, too, arose the force, at once monarchic and municipal, which overthrew the feudal system. It was the remnant of the old Roman ideas of provincial organisation that first formed the counties and duchies which afterwards coalesced into a state. It was the memory of the Roman township which gave birth to the first free towns of Europe. It was the tradition of a Roman emperor which, by long intermediate steps, transformed the Teutonic chieftain into the modern king or emperor. London, York, Lincoln, Winchester, Gloucester, and Chester were Roman cities, and formed then, as they did for the earlier periods of our history, the pivots of our national administration. Paris, Rouen, Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, in France; Constance, Basle, Coblentz, Cologne, upon the Rhine; Cadiz, Barcelona, Seville, Toledo, Lisbon, in the Iberian — Genoa, Milan, Verona, Rome, and Naples in the Italian peninsula, were in Roman, as in modern times, the great national centres of their respective countries. But, above all else, Rome founded a permanent system of free obedience to the laws on the one hand, and a temperate administration of them on the other; the constant sense of each citizen having his place in a complex whole.

The Roman's strength was in action, not in thought; but in thought he gave us something besides his special creation of universal law. It was his to discover the meaning of history. Egypt had carved on eternal rocks the pompous chronicles of kings. The Greeks wrote profound and brilliant memoirs. It was reserved to a Roman to conceive and execute the history of his people stretching over seven hundred years, and to give the first proof of the continuity and unity of national life. In art the Roman did little but develop the Greek types of architecture into stupendous and complex forms, fit for new uses, and worthy of his people's grandeur. But the great triumphs of his skill were in engineering. He invented the arch, the dome, and the viaduct. The bridges of the Middle Ages were studied from Roman remains. The great domes of Italian cathedrals, of which that of our own St. Paul's is an imitation, were formed directly on the model of a temple at Rome. But in thought, the great gift of Rome was in her language, which has served as an admirable instrument of religious, moral, and political reflection, and, with many dialectic variations, forms the base of the languages of three of the great nations of Europe. Then it was, under the Roman empire, that the stores of Greek thought became common to the world. As the empire of Alexander had shed them over the East, the empire of Rome gave them to the West. Greek language, literature, poetry, science, and art became the common education of the civilised world; and from the Grampians to the Euphrates, from the Atlas to the Rhine and the Caucasus, for the first and only time in the history of man, Europe, Asia, and Africa formed one political whole. The union of the oriental half, indeed, was mainly external and material, but throughout the western half a common order of ideas prevailed. Their religion was the belief in many gods — a system in which each of the powers of nature, each virtue, each art, was thought to be the manifestation of some separate god. It was a system which stimulated activity, self-reliance, toleration, sociability, and art, but which left the external world a vague and unmeaning mystery, and the heart of man a prey to violent and conflicting passions. It possessed not that idea of unity which alone can sustain philosophy and science, and alone can establish in the breast a fixed and elevated moral conscience.

The Roman system had its strong points, but it had many weak. They were in the main three. It was a system founded upon war, upon slavery, upon fictions and dreams. As to war, it is most true that war was not then, as in modern times, the monstrous negation of civilisation. It seems that by war alone could nations then be pressed into that union which was essential to all future progress. Whilst war was common to all the nations of antiquity, with the Romans alone it became the instrument of progress. The Romans warred only to found peace. They did not so much conquer as incorporate the nations. Not more by the strength of the Roman than by the instinctive submission in the conquered to his manifest superiority, was the great empire built up. Victors and vanquished share in the honour of the common result — law, order, peace, and government. When the Romans conquered, it was once for all. That which once became a province of the Roman empire rested thenceforth in profound tranquillity. No standing armies, no brutal soldiery, overawed the interior or the towns. Whilst all within the circle of the empire rested in peace, along its frontiers stood the disciplined veterans of Rome watching the roving hordes of barbarians, protecting the pale of civilisation.

Still, however useful in its place, it was a system of war; a system necessarily fatal in the long-run to all progress, to all industry, to all the domestic virtues, to all the gentler feelings. In a state in which all great ideas and traditions originated in conquest, the dignity of labour, the arts of industry, were never recognised or respected; the era of conquest over, the existence of the great Roman became in too many cases purposeless, idle, and vicious. Charity, compassion, humanity, were unknown virtues. The home was sacrificed. The condition of woman in the wreck of the family relations sank to the lowest ebb. In a word, the stern virtues of the old Roman private life seemed ending in inhuman ferocity and monstrous debauchery.

Secondly, the Roman, like every ancient system, was a system of slavery. It existed only for the few. True industry was impossible. The whole industrial class were degraded. The owners of wealth and its producers were alike demoralised. In the great towns were gathered a miserable crowd of poor freemen, with all the vices of the 'mean whites.' Throughout Italy the land was cultivated, not by a peasantry, not by scattered labourers, but by gangs of slaves, guarded in workhouses and watched by overseers. Hence usually the free population and all civilisation was gathered in the towns. The spaces between and around them were wildernesses, with pasturage and slaves in place of agriculture and men.

Thirdly, it was a system based on a belief in a multitude of gods, a system without truth, or coherence, or power. There was no single belief to unite all classes in one faith. Nothing ennobling to trust in, no standard of right and wrong which could act on the moral nature. There were no recognised teachers. The moral and the material were hopelessly confused. The politicians had no system of morality, religion, or belief, and were void of moral authority, though they claimed to have a moral right. The philosophers and the moralists were hardly members of the state; each taught only to a circle of admirers, and exercised no wide social influence. The religion of the people had long ceased to be believed. It had long been without any moral purpose; it became a vague mass of meaningless traditions.

With these threefold sources of corruption — war, slavery, false belief — the Roman empire, so magnificent without, was a rotten fabric within. Politically vigorous, morally it was diseased. Never perhaps has the world witnessed cases of such stupendous moral corruption, as when immense power, boundless riches, and native energy were left as they were then without object, control, or shame. Then, from time to time, there broke forth a very orgy of wanton strength. But its hour was come. The best spirits were all filled with a sense of the hollowness and corruption around them. Statesmen, poets, and philosophers in all these last eras were pouring forth their complaints and fears, or feebly attempting remedies. The new element had long been making its way unseen, had long been preparing the ground, and throughout the civilised world there was rising up a groan of weariness and despair.

For three centuries a belief in the existence of one God alone, in whom were concentrated all power and goodness, who cared for the moral guidance of mankind, a belief in the immortality of the soul and its existence in another state, had been growing up in the minds of the best Greek thinkers. The noble morality of their philosophers had taken strong hold of the higher consciences of Rome, and had diffused amongst the better spirits throughout the empire new and purer types. Next the great empire itself, forcing all nations in one state, had long inspired in its worthiest members a sense of the great brotherhood of mankind, had slowly mitigated the worst evils of slavery, and paved the way for a religious society. Thirdly, another and a greater cause was at work. Through Greek teachers the world had long been growing familiar with the religious ideas of Asia, its conceptions of a superhuman world, of a world of spirit, angel, demon, future state, and overruling Creator, with its mystical imagery, its spiritual poetry, its intense zeal and fervent emotion. And now, partly from the contact with Greek thought and Roman civilisation, a great change was taking place in the very heart of that small Jewish race, of all the races of Asia known to us the most intense, imaginative, and pure: possessing a high sense of personal morality, the keenest yearnings of the heart, and the deepest capacity for spiritual fervour. In their midst arose a fellowship of devoted brethren, gathered around one noble and touching character, which adoration has veiled in mystery till he passes from the pale of definite history. On them had dawned the vision of a new era of their national faith, which should expand the devotion of David, the spiritual zeal of Isaiah, and the moral power of Samuel into a gentler, wider, and more loving spirit.

How this new idea grew to the height of a new religion, and was shed over the whole earth by the strength of its intensity and its purity, is to us a familiar tale. We know how the first fellowship of the brethren met; how they went forth with words of mercy, love, justice, and hope; we know their self-denial, humility, and zeal; their heroic lives and awful deaths; their loving natures and their noble purposes; how they gathered around them wherever they came the purest and greatest; how across mountains, seas, and continents the communion of saints joined in affectionate trust; how from the deepest corruption of the heart arose a yearning for a truer life; how the new faith, ennobling the instincts of human nature, raised up the slave, the poor, and the humble to the dignity of common manhood, and gave new meaning to the true nature of womanhood; how, by slow degrees, the church, with its rule of right, of morality, and of communion, arose; how the first founders and apostles of this faith lived and died, and all their gifts were concentrated in one, of all the characters of certain history doubtless the loftiest and purest — the unselfish, the great-hearted Paul.

Deeply as this story must always interest us, let us not forget that the result was due not to one man or to one people — that each race gave its share to the whole: Greece, her intellect and grace; Rome, her social instinct, her genius for discipline; Judæa, her intensity of belief and personal morality; Egypt and the African coast, their combination of Hellenic, Judaic, and Roman traditions. The task that lay before the new religion was immense. It was, upon a uniform faith, to found a system of sound and common morality; to reform the deep-rooted evils of slavery; to institute a method which should educate, teach, and guide, and bring out the tenderer, purer, and higher instincts of our nature. The powers of mind and of character had been trained, first by Greece and then by Rome. To the Christian church came the loftier mission of ruling the affections and the heart.

From henceforth the history of the world shows a new character.

Now and henceforward we see two elements in civilisation working side by side — the practical and the moral. There is now a system to rule the state and a system to act upon the mind; a body of men to educate, to guide and elevate the spirit and the character of the individual, as well as a set of rules to enforce the laws and direct the action of the nation. There is henceforward the state and the church. Hitherto all had been confused; statesmen were priests and teachers; public officers pretended to order men's lives by law, and pretended in vain. Henceforward for the true sequence of history we must fix our view on Europe, on Western Europe alone: we leave aside the East. The half-Romanised, the half-Christianised East will pass to the empire of Mohammed, to the Arab, the Mongol, and the Turk. For the true evolution of civilised life we must regard the heirs of time, the West, in which is centred the progress and the future of the race. Henceforward, then, for the ten centuries of the Middle Ages which succeeded in Western Europe the fall of the Roman empire, we have two movements to watch together — Feudalism and Catholicism — the system of the state and the system of the church: let us turn now to the former.

The vast empire of Rome broke up with prolonged convulsions. Its concentration in any single hand, however necessary as a transition, became too vast as a permanent system. It wanted a rural population; it was wholly without local life. Long the awestruck barbarians stood pausing to attack. At length they broke in. Ever bolder and more numerous tribes poured onwards. In wave after wave they swept over the whole empire, sacking cities, laying waste the strongholds, at length storming Rome itself; and laws, learning, industry, art, civilisation itself, seem swallowed up in the deluge. For a moment it appeared that all that was Roman had vanished. It was submerged, but not destroyed. Slowly the waters of this overwhelming invasion abate. Slowly the old Roman towns and their institutions begin to appear above the waste like the highest points of a flooded country. Slowly the old landmarks reappear and the forms of civilised existence. Four centuries were passed in one continual ebb and flow; but at length the restless movement subsided. One by one the conquering tribes settled, took root, and occupied the soil. Step by step they learned the arts of old Rome. At length they were transformed from the invaders into the defenders. King after king strove to give form to the heaving mass, and put an end to this long era of confusion. One, at length, the greatest of them all, succeeded, and reared the framework of modern Europe.

It was the imperial Charlemagne, the greatest name of the Middle Ages, who, like some Roman emperor restored to life, marshalled the various tribes which had settled in France, Germany, Italy, and the north of Spain, into a single empire, beat back, in a long life of war, the tide of invaders on the west, the north, and south, Saxon, Northman, and Saracen, and awakened anew in the memory of nations the type of civil government and organised society. His work in itself was but a single and a temporary effort; but in its distant consequences it has left great permanent effects. It was like a desperate rally in the midst of confusion; but it gave mankind time to recover much that they had lost. In his empire may be traced the nucleus of the state system of Western Europe; by the traditions of his name, the modern monarchies were raised into power. He too gave shape and vigour to the first efforts of public administration. But a still greater result was the indirect effect of his life and labours. It was by the spirit of his established rule that the feudal system which had been spontaneously growing up from beneath the *débris* of the Roman empire, first found strength to develop into a methodical form, received an imperial sanction to its scheme, and the type of its graduated order of rule.

What was this feudal system, and what were its results? It may be described as a local organisation of reciprocal *duty* and *privilege*. In the first place, it was a system of local defence. The knight was bound to guard his fee, the baron his barony, the count his county, the duke his duchy. Then it was a system of local government. The lord of the manor had his court of justice, the great baron his greater court, and the king his court above all. Then it was a system of local industry; the freeholder tilled his own fields, the knight was responsible for the welfare of his own lands. The lord had an interest in the prosperity of his lordship. Hence slowly arose an agricultural industry, impossible in any other way. The knight cleared the country of robbers, or beat back invaders, whilst the husbandman ploughed beneath his castle walls. The nation no longer, as under Greece and Rome, was made up of scattered towns. It had a local root, a rural population, and complete system of agricultural life. The monstrous centralisation of Rome was gone, and a local government began.

But the feudal system was not merely material, it was also moral; not simply political, it was social also — nay, also religious. The whole of society was bound into a hierarchy or long series of gradations. Each man had his due place and rank, his rights, and his duties. The knight owed protection to his men; his men owed their services to him. Under the Roman system, there had been only citizens and slaves. Now there was none so high but had grave duties to all below; none so low, not the meanest serf, but had a claim for protection. Hence, all became, from king to serf, recognised members of one common society. Thence sprang the closest bond which has ever bound man to man. To the noble natures of the northern invaders was due the new idea of personal loyalty, the spirit of truth, faithfulness, devotion, and trust, the lofty sense of honour which bound the warrior to his captain, the vassal to his lord, the squire to his knight. It ripened into the finest temper which has ever ennobled the man of action, the essence of chivalry; in its true sense not dead, not destined to die — the temper of mercy, courtesy, and truth, of fearlessness and trust, of a generous use of power and strength, of succour to the weak, comfort to the poor, reverence for age, for goodness, and for woman; which revolts against injustice, oppression, and untruth, and never listens to a call unmoved. It is not possible that this spirit is dead. It watched the cradle of modern society, and is the source of our poetry and art; it must live for future service, transformed from a military to a peaceful society. It may yet revive the seeds of trust and duty between man and man, inspire the labourer with dignity and generosity, raise the landlord to a consciousness of duty, and renew the mysterious bond which unites all those who labour in a common work.

We turn to the Church, the moral element which pervades the Middle Ages. Amidst the crash of the falling empire, as darker grew the storm which swept over the visible State on earth, more and more the better spirits turned their eyes towards a Kingdom above the earth. They turned, as the great Latin father relates, amidst utter corruption to an entire reconstruction of morality; in the wreck of all earthly greatness, they set their hearts upon a future life, and strove amidst anarchy and bloodshed to found a moral union of society. Hence rose the Catholic Church, offering to the thoughtful a mysterious and inspiring faith; to the despairing and the remorseful a new and higher life ; to the wretched, comfort, fellowship, and aid ; to the perplexed a majestic system of belief and practice — in its creed Greek, in its worship Asiatic, in its constitution Roman. In it we see the Roman genius for organisation and law, transformed and revived. In the fall of her material greatness Rome's social greatness survived. Rome still remained the centre of the civilised world. Latin was still the language which bound men of distant lands together. From Rome went forth the edicts which were common to all Europe. The majesty of Rome was still the centre of civilisation. The bishop's court took the place of that of the imperial governor. The peace of the church took the place of the peace of Rome ; and from the first, the barbarian invaders who overthrew the hollow greatness of the empire humbled themselves reverently before the ministers of religion.

The church stood between the conqueror and the conquered, and joined them both in one. She told to all — Roman and barbarian, slave or freeman, great or weak — how there was one God, one Saviour of all, one equal soul in all, one common judgment, one common life hereafter. She told them how all, as children of one Father, were in His eyes equally dear ; how charity, mercy, humility, devotion alone would make them worthy of His love ; and at these words there rose up in the fine spirits of the new races a sense of brotherhood amongst mankind, a desire for a higher life, a zeal for all the gentler qualities and the higher duties, such as the world had not seen before. Thus was her first task accomplished, and she founded a system of morality common to all and possible to all. She spoke to the slave of his immortal soul, to the master of the guilt of slavery. Master and slave should meet alike within her walls, and lie side by side within her catacombs; and thus her second task was accomplished, and she overthrew for ever the system of slavery, and raised up the labourer into the dignity of a citizen. Then she told how their common Master, of power unbounded, had loved the humble and the weak. She told of the simple lives of saints and martyrs, their tender care of the poorer brethren, their spirit of benevolence, self-sacrifice, and self-abasement; and thus the third great task was accomplished, when she placed the essence of practical religion in care for the weak, in affection for the family, in reverence for woman, in benevolence to all, and in personal self-denial.

Next, she undertook to educate all alike. She provided a body of common teachers; she organised schools; she raised splendid cathedrals, where all might be brought into the presence of the beautiful, and see all forms of art in their highest perfection — architecture, and sculpture, and painting, and work in glass, in iron, and in wood, heightened by inspiring ritual and touching music. She accepted all without thought of birth or place. She gathered to herself all the knowledge of the time, though all was subordinate to religious life. The priests, so far as such were then possible, were poets, historians, dramatists, musicians, architects, sculptors, painters, judges, lawyers, magistrates, ministers, students of science, engineers, philosophers, astronomers, and moralists. Lastly, she had another task, and she accomplished even that. It was to stand between the tyrant and his victim; to succour the oppressed, to humble the evil ruler, to moderate the horrors of war; above all, to join nation to nation, to mediate between hostile races, to give to civilised Europe some element of union and cohesion.

Let us think of this church — this humanising power of the Middle Ages — as it was in its glory, not in its decay. Let us remember it as a system of life which for ten centuries possessed the passionate devotion of the foremost spirits of their time; one which has left us a rich store of thought and teaching, of wise precept, lofty poetry, and matchless devotion; as a system which really penetrated and acted on the lives of men. Let us think of it as it was in essence — in its virtues, not in its vices — truly the union of all the men of intellect and character of their age towards one common end: not like Egyptian priests, pretending to govern by law; not like Greek philosophers, expounding to a chosen sect; not like modern *savants*, thinking for mere love of thought, or mere love of fame, without method or concert, without moral guidance, without social purpose; but a system in which the wisest and the best men of their day, themselves reared in a common teaching, organised on a vast scale, and directed by one general rule, devoted the whole energies of their brains and hearts in unison together, to the moral guidance of society; sought to know only that they might teach, to teach only to improve, and lived only to instruct, to raise, to humanise their fellow-men. Let us think of it thus as it was at its best; and in this forget even the cruelty, the imposture, and the degradation of its fall; let horror for its vices and pity for its errors be lost in one sentiment of admiration, gratitude, and honour, for this the best and the last of all, the organised systems of human society; of all the institutions of mankind, the most worthy of remembrance and regret.

But if we are generous in our judgment, let us be just. The Catholic system ended, it is most true, in disastrous and shameful ruin. Excellent in intention and in method, it was from the first doomed to inevitable corruption from the inherent faults of its constitution; and its intellectual basis was so distorted and precarious, that it was stained with vices and crimes from the very first generation. It had trained and elevated the noblest side of human nature — the religious, the moral, and the social instincts of our being; and the energy with which it met this, the prime want of men, upheld it through the long era of its corruption, and still upholds it in its last pitiable spasm. But with the intellectual and with the practical sphere of man's life it was by its nature incompetent to deal. In its zeal for man's moral progress it had taken its stand upon a false and even a preposterous belief. Burning to subdue the lower passions of man's nature, it had vainly hoped to crush the practical instincts of his activity. It discarded with disdain the thoughts and labours of the ancient world. It proclaimed as the ideal of human life a visionary and even a selfish asceticism. For a period, for a long period, its transcendent and indispensable services maintained it in spite of every defect and vice; but at last the time came when the outraged instincts reasserted their own, and showed how hopeless is any religion or system of life not based on a conception of human nature as a whole, at once complete and true.

The church began in indifference towards science and contempt for material improvement. Indifference and contempt passed at length into hatred and horror; and it ended in denouncing science, and in a bitter conflict with industry. At last it had become, in spite of its better self, the enemy of all progress, all thought, all industry, all freedom. It allied itself with all that was retrograde and arbitrary. It fell from bad to worse, and settled into an existence of timid repression. Hence it came that the church, attempting to teach upon a basis of falsehood, to direct man's active life upon a merely visionary creed, to govern a society which it only half understood, succeeded only for a time. It was scarcely founded before it began to break up. It had scarcely put forth its strength before it began to decay. It stood like one of its own vast cathedrals, building for ages yet never completed; falling to ruin whilst yet unfinished; filling us with a sense of beauty and of failure; a monument of noble design and misdirected strength. It fell like the Roman empire, with prolonged convulsion and corruption, and left us a memory of cruelty, ignorance, tyranny, rapacity, and vice, which we too often forget were but the symptoms and consequences of its fall.

We have stood beside the rise and fall of four great stages of the history of mankind. The priestly systems of Asia, the intellectual activity of Greece, the military empire of Rome, the moral government of Catholicism, had each been tried in turn, and each had been found wanting. Each had disdained the virtues of the others; each had failed to incorporate the others. With the fall of the Catholic and feudal system, we enter upon the age of modern society. It is an age of dissolution, reconstruction, variety, movement, and confusion. It is an era in which all the former elements reassert themselves with new life, all that had ever been attempted is renewed again; an era of amazing complexity, industry, and force, in which every belief, opinion, and idea is criticised, transformed, and expanded. Every institution of society and habit of life is thoroughly unsettled and remodelled; all the sciences are constructed — art, industry, policy, religion, philosophy, and morality are developed with a vigorous and constant growth; but, withal, it is an era in which all is individual, separate, and free: without system, or unity, or harmony, such as had marked the four preceding epochs.

First, the feudal system broke up under the influence of the very industry which it had itself fostered and reared.

The great fiefs, as they became settled, gradually gathered into masses; one by one they fell into the hands of kings, and at length upon the ruins of feudalism arose the great monarchies. The feudal atoms crystallised into the actual nations of Europe. The variety and dispersion of the feudal system vanished. A central monarchy established one uniform order, police, and justice; and modern political society, as we know it, rose. The invention of gunpowder had now made the knight helpless, the bullet pierced his mail, and standing armies took the place of the feudal militia. The discovery of the compass had opened the ocean to commerce. The free towns expanded with a new industry, and covered the continent with infinitely varied products. The knight became the landlord, the man-at-arms became the tenant, the serf became the free labourer, and the emancipation of the worker, the first, the greatest victory of the church, was complete.

Thus, at last, the energies of men ceased to be occupied by war, to which a small section of the society was now permanently devoted. Peace became in fact the natural, not the accidental, state of man. Society passed into its final phase of industrial existence. Peace, industry, and wealth again gave scope to thought. The riches of the earth were ransacked, new continents were opened, intercourse increased over the whole earth. Greeks, flying from Constantinople before the Turks, spread over Europe, bringing with them books, instruments, inscriptions, gems, and sculptures: — the science, the literature, and the inventions of the ancient world, long stored up on the shores of the Bosphorus. Columbus discovered America. The Portuguese sailed round Africa to India; a host of daring adventurers penetrated untraversed seas and lands. Man entered at last upon the full dominion of the earth. Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo unveiled the mystery of the world, and made a revolution in all thought. Mathematics, chemistry, botany, and medicine, preserved mainly by the Arabs during the Middle Ages, were again taken up almost from the point where the Greeks had left them. The elements of the material earth were eagerly explored. The system of experiment (which Bacon reduced to a method) was worked out by the common labour of philosophers and artists. For the first time the human form was dissected and explored. Physiology, as a science, began. Human history and society became the subject of regular and enlightened thought. Politics became a branch of philosophy. With all this the new knowledge was scattered by the printing-press, itself the product and the stimulus of the movement; in a word, the religious ban was raised from off the human powers. The ancient world was linked on to the modern. Science, speculation, and invention lived again after twelve centuries of trance. A fresh era of progress opened with the new-found treasures of the past.

Next, before this transformation of ideas the church collapsed. Its hollow dogmas were exposed, its narrow prejudices ridiculed, its corruptions probed. Men's consciences and brains rose up against an institution which pretended to teach without knowledge, and to govern though utterly disorganised. Convulsion followed on convulsion; the struggle we call the Reformation opened, and led to a series of religious wars, which for a century and a half shook Europe to its foundations. At the close of this long era of massacre and war, it was found that the result achieved was small indeed. Europe had been split into two religious systems, of which neither one nor the other could justify its enormous pretensions. Admiration for the noble characters of the first Reformers, for their intensity, truth, and zeal, their heroic lives and deaths, the affecting beauty of their purposes and hopes, is yet possible to us, whilst we confess that the Protestant, like the Catholic faith, had failed to organise human industry, society, and thought; that both had failed to satisfy the wants and hopes of man. More and more have thought and knowledge grown into even fiercer conflict with authority of Book or Pope; more and more in Catholic France, as in Protestant England, does the moral guidance of men pass from the hands of priests, or sect, to be assumed, if it be assumed at all, by the poet, the philosopher, the essayist, and even the journalist; more and more do church and sect stand dumb and helpless in presence of the evils with which society is rife.

Side by side the religious and the political system tottered in ruin together. From the close of the fifteenth century, now one, now the other was furiously assailed. For the most part, both were struck at once. The long religious wars of Germany and France; the defence by the heroic William the Silent of the free Republic of Holland against the might of Spain; the glorious repulse of its Armada by England; the immortal revolution achieved by our greatest statesman, Cromwell; the battle of his worthy successor, William of Orange, against the oppression of Louis XIV., were all but parts of one long struggle, which lasted during the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — a struggle in which religion and politics both equally shared, a struggle between the old powers of Feudalism and Catholicism on the one side, with all the strength of ancient systems, against the half-formed, ill-governed force of freedom, industry, and thought; a long and varied struggle in which aristocracy, monarchy, privileged caste, arbitrary and military power, church formalism, dogmatism, superstition, narrow teaching, visionary worship, and hollow creeds, were each in turn attacked, and each in turn prostrated.

A general armistice followed this long and exhausting struggle. The principles of Protestantism, Constitutionalism, Toleration, and the balance of power, established a system of compromise, and for a century restored some order in the political and religious world. But in the world of ideas the contest grew still keener. Industry expanded to incredible proportions, and the social system was transformed before it. Thought soared into unimagined regions, and reared a new realm of science, discovery, and art. Wild social and religious visions arose and passed through the spirit of mankind. At last the forms and ideas of human life, material, social, intellectual, and moral, had all been utterly transformed, and the fabric of European society rested in peril on the crumbling crust of the past.

The great convulsion came. The gathering storm of centuries burst at length in the French Revolution. Then, indeed, it seemed that chaos was come again. It was an earthquake blotting out all trace of what had been, engulfing the most ancient structures, destroying all former landmarks, and scattering society in confusion and dismay. It spreads from Paris through every corner of France, from France to Italy, to Spain, to Germany, to England; it pierces, like the flash from a vast storm-cloud, through every obstacle of matter, space, or form. It kindles all ideas of men, and gives wild energy to all purposes of action. For though terrible, it was not deadly. It came not to destroy but to construct, not to kill but to give life. And through the darkest and bloodiest whirl of the chaos there rose up clear on high, before the bewildered eyes of men, a vision of a new and greater era yet to come — of brotherhood, of freedom, and of union, of never-ending progress, of mutual help, trust, co-operation, and goodwill; an era of true knowledge, of real science, and practical discovery; but, above all, an era of active industry for all, of the dignity and consecration of labour, of a social life just to all, common to all, and beneficent to all.

That great revolution is not ended. The questions it proposed are not yet solved. We live still in the heavings of its shock. It yet remains with us to show how the last vestiges of the feudal, hereditary, and aristocratic systems may give place to a genuine, an orderly, and permanent republic; how the trammels of a faith long grown useless and retrograde may be removed without injury to the moral, religious, and social instincts, which are still much entangled in it; how industry may be organised, and the workman enrolled with full rights of citizenship, a free, a powerful, and a cultivated member of the social body. Such is the task before us. The ground is all prepared, the materials are abundant and sufficient. We have a rich harvest of science, a profusion of material facilities, a vast collection of the products, ideas, and inventions of past ages. Every vein of human life is full; every faculty has been trained to full efficiency; every want of our nature is supplied. We need now only harmony, order, union; we need only to group into a whole these powers and gifts: the task before us is to discover some complete and balanced system of life; some common basis of belief; some object for the imperishable religious instincts and aspirations of mankind; some faith to bind the existence of man to the visible universe around him; some common social end for thought, action, and feeling; some common ground for teaching, studying, or judging. We need to extract the essence of all older forms of civilisation, to combine them, and harmonise them in one, a system of existence which may possess something of the calm, the completeness, and the symmetry of the earliest societies of men; the zeal for truth, knowledge, science, and improvement, which marks the Greek, with something of his grace, his life, his radiant poetry and art; the deep social spirit of Rome, its political sagacity, its genius for government, law, and freedom, its noble sense of public life; above all else, the constancy, earnestness, and tenderness of the mediæval faith, with its discipline of devotion to the service of a Power far greater than self, with its zeal for the spiritual union of mankind. We have to combine these with the industry, the knowledge, the variety, the activity, the humanity, of modern life.

CHAPTER III.

SOME GREAT BOOKS OF HISTORY.

Of all subjects of study, it is History which stands most sorely in need of a methodical plan of reading. The choice of books is nowhere a more perplexing task: for the subject is practically infinite; the volumes impossible to number; and the range of fact interminable. There are some three or four thousand years of recorded history, and the annals, it may be, of one hundred different peoples, each forming continuous societies of men during many centuries. Many famous histories in one or two thousand pages cover at most about half a century: and that for the life of one nation alone. Macaulay's fascinating story-book occupied him, we are told, more years of labour to compose than, in some of its periods, the events occupied in fact. A brilliant writer has given us twelve picturesque volumes which almost exactly cover the life of one queen. The standard history of France extends to 10,000 pages. And it is whispered at Oxford that a conscientious annalist of the Civil War completes the history of each year in successive volumes by the continuous study of an equal period. At this rate forty thousand years would hardly suffice to compile the annals of mankind.

In this infinite sea of histories, memoirs, biographies, and annals, how is a busy man to choose? He cannot read the forty thousand volumes — nor four thousand, nor four hundred. Which are the most needful? which period, which movement, which people, is most deserving of study? When I say study, I am not thinking of students, but of ordinary fireside reading in our mother-tongue for busy men and women: men and women who cannot give their whole lives to libraries, who, 'like the ancient Greeks,' as Disraeli says, know no language but their own, and who are not going in for competitive examinations — if, indeed, these islands still hold man, woman, boy, or girl who has never caught that mental influenza, the examination plague. Learned persons and literary persons (which is not always the same thing) are apt to assume that every one has of course read all the ordinary books; they never speak about 'standard' works, in every gentleman's library, but, alas! not always in every gentleman's head. They give little help to the general reader, assuming that every schoolboy has the dynasties of Egyptian kings at his finger's end, and can repeat the list of the Popes backwards, as Macaulay did. No doubt, as schoolboys and schoolgirls, the week after we had 'floored' that second history paper in the final, we could most of us perform these feats of memory. But many of us have forgotten these dates and names, have got rather mixed about our Egyptian dynasties, and are even somewhat shaky with our Bourbons, Plantagenets, and Hohenstaufens. To those of us in such a case, it is tantalising to be dazzled by the learned with the latest cuneiform inscription, or the last newly excavated barrow, which finally decides the site of some 'scuffle of kites and crows' in the seventh century.

I propose to myself to speak about a few simple old books of general history, which to historians and the learned are matters of A B C; just as Mr. Cook's obliging guides personally conduct the untravelled to Paris, Venice, and Rome. We are as ambitious and wide-roaming nowadays in our reading as in our touring. The travelled world hardly considers it leaving home, unless it is bound for Central Asia, the Pacific, or Fusiyama. There are, however, still some fine things in the old country which every one has not seen; and my humble task is simply to act as cicerone to those who seek to visit for the first time in their lives the great fields of eternal history, who have but limited time at their disposal, who could not find their way without a guide, and speak no foreign tongue.

Without some organic unity in its conception, history tends to become literary curiosity and display, weakening our mental force rather than strengthening it. History cannot mean the record of all the facts that ever happened and the biographies of all those whose lives are recorded; for these are infinite. There is a type of bookman, most frequently met with in Germany, to whom the reading and the making of books seem to be functions of nature, as it is a function of nature for the cow to eat grass and to give milk; men to whom it is a matter of absolute unconcern what is the subject of the book, the matter, origin, or ultimate use of the book, provided only the book be new. If a vacant gap can be discovered in the jungle of books where a spare hole can be filled, it matters no more to the author what end the book may serve, than it concerns the cow what becomes of its milk. The cow has to secrete fresh milk, and the author has to secrete a new work. And there is a type of historian to whom all human events are equally material. It is not the historian's concern, they think, to pick and choose, or to prefer one fact to another. All facts accurately recorded are truth: and to set them forth in a very big octavo volume is *history*.

The true object of history is to show us the life of the human race in its fulness, and to follow up the tale of its continuous and difficult evolution. The conception of the progress of civilisation in intelligible sequence, is the greatest achievement of modern thought. History is the biography of civilised man: it can no more be cut into absolute sections than can the biography of a single life. And to devote our sole interest to some small period, country, or race is as rational as it would be to take a few years to stand for the life-story of a great hero. That human history makes one intelligible biography does not imply that we have to load our memories with an interminable roll of facts, dates, and names. This long record may be grouped into a manageable series of dominant phases. To understand the spirit and character of each of these phases is the root of the matter. The events and persons are manifestations of that character, and serve to illustrate and vivify the spirit. History becomes 'the old almanack' which the dull cynic called it, when we treat it from the photographic, the local, the tribal point of view, instead of the human and the organic point of view.

Neither recondite researches nor novel theories are needed to decide what are the leading epochs and dominant phases in general history. The world has long been agreed upon them, with some variations in detail, and modifications in the manner of subsections. For practical purposes they may be grouped into six.

I. *The Early Oriental Theocracies.* — These are the great stationary systems, held together by dominant religious discipline, and the pressure of social custom. The types of these are the Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, and Indian theocratic monarchies, and the variations we find in the Chinese, Buddhist, Japanese empires, or to some extent in modern Mahometan kingdoms. These account for vast periods of history, and for far the largest portions of the planet.

It is specially significant that the Fetichist, or spontaneous Nature-worshipping epochs of human life, have no recorded history; although they form far the longest epochs in time, and are far the most extensive in space. History, in the sense of recorded fact, is one of the fine creations of Theocracy and the great sacerdotal state-organisations. The history of the Nature-worshippers has to be gathered from analogy, remnants, and extant tribes. It has neither record, names, dates, nor facts.

II. *The Rise and Development of the Greek World.* — This involves the story of the separate republics, of the intellectual activity, personal freedom, and individual self-assertion characteristic of the Hellenic spirit. If a subsection were here inserted, it would be (II. *b*) the rise, development, and dissolution of Alexander's empire.

III. *The Rise and Consolidation of the Roman World.* — The origin of the Republic, the formation of the dictatorial system, the ultimate dissolution of the bifurcated Roman empire. Here also, if subsections were inserted, the period of a thousand years falls into two divisions: (*a*) that of the Republic, down to Julius Cæsar; (*b*) that of the Empire, down to Justinian.

IV. *The Catholic and Feudal World:* known as the Middle Ages. — This epoch, though it has the double aspect, Catholic and Feudal, cannot be grouped into divisions. For Catholicism and Feudalism are contemporary, co-ordinate, and indissolubly associated movements. They imply each other. They are converse phases; but not successive or distinct epochs.

V. *The Formation and Development of the Great European States.* — This includes the rise and growth of the monarchies of modern times — the Renascence of Learning, with Humanism, the Reformation, and what we call Modern History proper, down to the last century.

This is one of the most complex of all the epochs: and it may properly be divided into subsections thus: —

V.(*a*) The rise and consolidation of the State System of modern Europe, with the intellectual and artistic revival that followed it.
V.(*b*) The rise, issue, and settlement of the anti-Catholic Reformation, and the religious wars that it involved, down to the Peace of Westphalia.
V.(*c*) The struggle between the monarchical and the republican principles in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Holland, and England.
V.(*d*) The great territorial and mercantile wars in Europe, and the struggle for the Balance of Power, down to the close of the Seven Years' War.

VI. *The Political and Industrial Revolution of the Modern World.* — This would include the rise and consolidation of Prussia, of the United States; the intellectual, scientific, and industrial revolution of the last century; the French Revolution, and the wars that issued out of it; the development of transmarine empires and international communication; Democracy and Socialism in their various types.

These six great phases of human civilisation may be mentally kept apart for purposes of clear thought, and as wide generalisations; but some of them practically overlap, and blend into each other. And it is only whilst we keep our eyes intent on the world's stage, rather than some local movement, that these phases appear to be distinct. The vast ages of the Eastern and Egyptian Theocracies are separate enough both in time and in spirit. But the Greek and Roman worlds are to some extent contemporary, and at last they melt into one compound whole, when Rome incorporated Greece: its territory, literature, culture, and art. The whole mental apparatus, and finally the manners, of the empire became Greek; until at last the capital of the Roman world was transferred to a Greek city, and the so-called 'Romans' spoke Greek and not Latin. Thus we may, for many purposes, treat the Græco-Roman world as one: and in fact combine the second and the third epochs.

What we call the Mediæval phase is very sharply marked off from its predecessor by the spread of Christianity; and it seems easy enough to distinguish our fourth from our third epoch, both in time and in character. But this holds good only for Europe as a whole; and it is not so easy, if we take Byzantine history by itself, to determine the point at which the imperial government at Constantinople ceases to be Græco-Roman, and begins to be Mediæval. Nor, indeed, is it quite easy to fix a date or a name, when the Papacy ceased to belong to the ancient world, and came to be the spiritual centre of the mediæval world. Again, the modern world is very definitely marked off from the mediæval, and we can with precision fix on the second half of the fifteenth century as the date of its definitive settlement. But if we keep our attention solely on the history of the church, of literature, or of thought, the dissolution of the mediæval world is seen to be preparing quite a century earlier than the taking of Constantinople by the Turks.

Our sixth epoch, the age of the Revolution, is only the rapid and violent form of a process which has been going on since the general use of printing, of guns, and the era of ocean trade and accumulated wealth. It had been in operation in all the attacks on the Catholic doctrines and institutions, in the revival of ancient learning and the advance of science, in the consolidation of the European kingdoms; and even long before in the labours of such men as Roger Bacon, Dante, Langland, Wickliffe, Huss, and Bruno. For these reasons the revolutionary agitation of the last century and a half, is nothing but the more intense and conscious form of the movement to found a new modern world which began with the decay of Catholicism and Feudalism.

Therefore, if we are desirous of keeping in the highest generalisations of history, and indeed for many practical purposes, the six great epochs of universal history may be reduced to these four: —

1. *The Ancient Monarchies — or the Theocratic age.*
2. *The Græco-Roman world — or the Classical.*
3. *The Catholic and Feudal world — or the Mediæval.*
4. *The Modern — or the Revolutionary world of Free Thought and Free Life.*

These dominant epochs (whether we treat them as six or as grouped into four) should each be kept co-ordinate and clear in our minds, as mutually dependent on each other, and each as an inseparable part of a living whole. No conception of history would be adequate, or other than starved and stunted, which entirely kept out of sight any one of these indispensable and characteristic epochs. They are all indissoluble; yet utterly different, and radically contrasted, just as the child is to the man, or the man to the woman; and for the same reason — that they are forms of one organic humanity.

It follows, that it is not at all the history of our own country which is all-important, overshadowing all the rest, nor the history of the times nearest to our own. From the spiritual, and indeed the scientific, point of view, if history be the continuous biography of the evolution of the human race, it may well be that the history of remoter times, which have the least resemblance to our own, may often be the more valuable to us, as correcting national prejudices and the narrow ideas bred in us by daily custom, whilst it is the wider outlook of universal history that alone can teach us all the vast possibilities and latent forces in human society, and the incalculable limits of variation which are open to man's civilisation. The history of other races, and of very different systems, may be of all things the best to correct our insular vanities, and our conventional prejudices. We have indeed to know the history of our own country, of the later ages. But the danger is, that we may know little other history.

Thus one who had a grasp on the successive phases of civilisation from the time of Moses until our own day; vividly conceiving the essential features of Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldean, and Persian society; who felt the inner heart of the classical world, and who was in touch with the soul of the mediæval religion and chivalry—would know more of true history than one who was simply master of the battles of the seventeenth century, and could catalogue, with dates and names, the annals of each German duchy, and each Italian republic. No doubt, for college examinations, they wring from raw lads, as Milton says, 'like blood from the nose,' the details of the Saxon coinage, and the latest German theory of the mark-system. These things are essential to examinations and prizes, and the good boy will give his whole mind to them. But they are far from essential to an intelligible understanding of the course which has been followed in the marvellous unfolding of our human destiny. To see this, in all the imposing unity of the great drama, it is not enough to be crammed with catalogues of official and military incidents. It is needful to have a living sense of the characteristic types of life which succeeded each other in such glaring contrast, and often with such deadly hatred, through the dominant phases of man's society on earth.

Our present business is to select a small choice of books of history, which are of permanent and daily resource to the general reader of English, and which have that charm and force of insight that no manual or school-book can possess. And we may begin with the fountain-head of primitive story, with the Father of history — Herodotus. Every one who reads seriously at all, every man, woman, and child who has ideas of any book above a yellow-covered novel, should know something of this most simple, fascinating, and instructive of historians. In schools and colleges a thorough mastery of Herodotus has long been the foundation of a historical education. But he deserves to be the familiar friend of every sensible reader.

This is the oldest volume of secular history that has reached us in anything like a complete state: and here in the earliest books of Herodotus we may watch the first naïve expression of the insatiable curiosity of the Hellenic mind brought face to face with the primeval theocracies of the Oriental world. It is a source of perennial delight to observe how the keen, busy, inquisitive, fearless Greek comes up to the venerable monuments of the East, and probes them with his critical acumen. We may gather rich lessons in philosophy, and not merely lessons in history and the story of man's progress, if we follow up this European, logical, eager, and almost modern observer, as he analyses and recounts the ways of the unchanging Past in Africa or in Asia. We seem to be standing beside the infant lispings of critical judgment, at the cradle of our social and political institutions, at the first tentative steps of that long development of society which has brought us to the world of to-day. What a prolonged epic of revolution in thought and in politics lay hid in such a phrase of Herodotus as this : 'The priests do say, but I think —,' or in the tale of the map of Hecatæus, or the embassy of Aristagoras to the Greeks of the mainland ! We trace this Greek inquirer stepping up to these colossi of an incalculable antiquity, with the free and bold mind of a modern *savant* exploring an Egyptian tomb or some prehistoric barrow, combined it may be with no small measure of the ignorant and contemptuous wonder of the ruder conqueror. In Herodotus we see a bright and varied picture of the whole of the primitive types of civilisation, and the first stirrings of fiery aspiration in the genius of movement as it gazed into the motionless features of the genius of permanence embodied in the Sphinx of the Nile valley.

It was the fashion once to disparage the good faith of Herodotus, and to ridicule his childlike credulity, his garrulous inconsequence, and his gratuitous guessing on matters both spiritual and physical. But there is now a reaction of opinion. And if Herodotus is not an exact observer nor a scientific reasoner, there is a disposition to admit more of foundation for some of his travellers' tales than was at first supposed. Nay, recent explorations and excavations both in Africa and in Asia have confirmed some of his most suspicious reports ; and, at any rate, we may follow those who think that he was doing his best with the sources of information before him. And it is clear that the earliest inquiries of all, in a field so vast and comprehensive, could only be made in a manner thus unsystematic and casual. Where scientific verification is not possible, it is well to have a variety of working hypotheses. Hearsay evidence, indeed, is anything but good evidence. But, where strict evidence is not to be had, it is useful, in great and decisive events, to collect all the hearsay evidence that is forthcoming at all. And this is what Herodotus did. He is no great philosopher in things social or in things physical. But he had that which the whole Eastern world and all the wisdom of the Egyptians could not produce, which the wealth of Persia could not buy, nor the priests of Babylon discover. He had that observant, inquisitive, critical eye that ultimately developed into Greek philosophy and science — the eye that let slip nothing in Nature or in Man — the mind that never rested till it had found some working hypothesis to account for every new and striking phenomenon. It is the first dawn of the modern spirit.

This most delightful of all story-books is abundantly open to the English reader. There are several translations, and for some purposes Herodotus, whose style is one of artless conversation, may be read in English almost as well as in the Greek. In the elaborate work of Canon Rawlinson we have a good translation, with abundant historical and antiquarian illustrations by the Canon and by Sir Henry Rawlinson, with maps, plans, and many drawings. Herodotus preserves to us the earliest consecutive account that the West has recorded of the ancient empires of the East. And, although his record is both casual and vague, it serves as a basis round which the researches of recent Orientalists may be conveniently grouped, just as Blackstone and Coke form the text of so many manuals of law, in spite of the fact that both are so largely obsolete. To use Herodotus with profit we need such a systematic *Manual of Ancient History* as that of Heeren. This book, originally published in 1799, and continued and corrected by the author down to the year 1828, although now in many respects rendered obsolete by subsequent discoveries, remains an admirable model of the historical summary. Unfortunately it requires so many corrections and additions that it can hardly be taken as the current text-book, all the more that the English translation itself, published in 1829 at Oxford, is not very easily procured. For all practical purposes, the book is now superseded by Canon Rawlinson's *Manual of Ancient History*, Oxford, 1878, which follows the plan of Heeren, covers nearly the same period, and treats of the same nations. It is, in fact, the *Manual* of Heeren corrected, rewritten, supplemented, and brought up to that date, somewhat overburdened with the masses of detail, wanting in the masterly conciseness of the great Professor of Göttingen, but embodying the learning and discoveries of three later generations.

But Egyptology and Assyriology are unstable quicksands in which every few years the authorities become obsolete by the discovery of fresh records and relics. Professor Sayce, the principal exponent of the untrustworthiness of Herodotus, assures us that Canon Rawlinson and his coadjutors have now become obsolete themselves, and that the history of the plains of the Nile and the Euphrates must again be rewritten. But the tendency to-day is, perhaps, inclined to treat the discoveries on which Professor Sayce relies as neither so certain nor so important as he was once disposed to think. For the general reader it may be enough to rely on Max Dunker's *History of Antiquity* (6 vols., translated 1878; see vols. i. and ii. for Egypt and Assyria).

There is another mode, besides that of books, whereby much of the general character of Oriental civilisation may be learned. That is, by pictures, illustrations, models, monuments, and the varied collections to be found in our own Museum, in the Louvre at Paris, and other collections of Oriental antiquities. Thousands of holiday-makers saunter through these galleries, and gaze at the figures in a vacant stare. But this is not to learn at all. The monuments and cases, wall-paintings and relics, require patient and careful study with appropriate books. The excellent handbooks of our Museum will make a good beginning, but the monuments of Egypt and Assyria are hardly intelligible without complete illustrated explanation. These are, for Egypt, the dissertations, notes, and woodcuts by various Egyptologists in Canon Rawlinson's English *Herodotus;* in Sir Gardner Wilkinson's great work on the *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, 1837; and his *Handbook for Egypt*, 1858.

The facts, dates, persons, and incidents of Egyptian history are still the problems of recondite archæology. The spirit of Egyptian civilisation may be grasped, without any copious reading, by any one who will seriously study instead of stare at the great Egyptian collections. Much may be learned, though in far less degree, by those who will study the Asiatic antiquities with such works as Layard's *Nineveh*, Fergusson's *History of Architecture*, Canon Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies*, and the dissertations in his English *Herodotus.* And much may be learned from Professor Sayce's *Ancient Empires of the East*, and from the recent series of the *Story of the Nations.* These are unequal in execution, and avowedly popular and elementary in design: but they are plain, cheap, accessible to all, and contain the most recent general views. Brugsch's great *History of Egypt*, translated 1879-1881, is rather a book for the special student of history than for the general reader.

It is not every reader who has leisure to master such a book as Rawlinson's English *Herodotus.* But something of this fountain of history all may know. Even in such a pleasant boy's book as Mr. Church's *Stories* *from the East* and *Stories from Herodotus* we get some flavour of the fine old Greek traveller. There are three great sections of Herodotus which are of special interest: 1. the history of the foundation of Cyrus' kingdom; 2. the books on the history, antiquities, and customs of Egypt; 3. the immortal story of Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Salamis. Literature contains no more enthralling page than the tale by the father of prose how the first great duel between the East and the West ended in the most momentous victory recorded in the annals of mankind. Every educated man should know by heart the wonderful story: how the virtue of Aristides, the daring of Miltiades, the heroism of Leonidas, and the genius of Themistocles saved the infant civilisation of Western Europe from the fate which overtook the far more cultivated races of Syria and Asia Minor. A distinguished Indian Mussulman, himself of the race of the Prophet, is wont to bewail the defeat of Xerxes as the greatest disaster in history. But for that, he says, the vanguard of civilisation would have advanced on Asiatic, and not on European, lines; on Theocratic instead of Democratic principles. The theology of the learned Syed may be impeached; but his history is sound.

One other Greek book of history all should know, perhaps the greatest of all histories, that of the Athenian Thucydides. Now Thucydides was in pre-eminent degree what Herodotus was not — a strictly scientific historian; one whose conception of the canons of historic precision has never been surpassed, against whom hardly a single error of fact, hardly a single mistaken judgment, has ever been brought home. Thucydides is much more than a great historian; or, rather, he was what every great historian ought to be — he was a profound philosopher. His history of the Peloponnesian War is like a portrait by

Titian: the whole mind and character, the inner spirit and ideals, the very tricks and foibles, of the man or the age come before us in living reality. No more memorable, truthful, and profound portrait exists than that wherein Thucydides has painted the Athens of the age of Pericles.

Athens in the age of Pericles, and under the guidance of Pericles, reached one of those supreme moments in the varying course of civilisation which, like the best dramas of Shakespeare or the Madonnas of Raphael, are incomparable creations of the human faculties standing apart for ever. With all its vices, follies, and littleness, nothing like it had ever been seen before, nothing like it can ever be seen again. It embodied originality, simplicity, beauty, audacity, and grace, with a fulness and harmony which the weary world, the heir of all the ages, can never recall. And in Thucydides it found the philosopher who penetrated to its inmost soul, and the artist who could paint it with living touch. How memorable are those monumental phrases which he puts into the mouth of his favourite hero or claims for his own work! 'My history,' he says, 'is an everlasting possession, not a prize composition which is heard and forgotten.' 'We men of Athens know how to cultivate the mind without losing our manhood, and to create beauty without extravagant costliness.' 'We count the man who cares nothing for the public weal as a worthless nuisance, and not simply an inoffensive nonentity.' 'All citizens take their share of the public burdens: all are free to offer their opinion in the public concerns.' 'We have no cast-iron system: every man with us is free to live his own life.' 'Life is harmonised by our civic festivals and our personal refinement.' 'The whole earth is the funeral monument of those who live a noble life: their epitaph is graven, not on stone, but on the hearts of men.'

Thucydides, alas! is not like Herodotus, easy to read and simple in his thought and language. His only, and very moderate, volume (a single copy of the *Times* newspaper contains as many words) is very close reading: crammed with profound thought, epigrammatic, intricate, obscure, and most peculiar in the turn of conglomerate phrase. But in the masterly translation of Dr. Jowett, and with the paraphrase and illustrations in the corresponding part of Grote's *History of Greece*, he may be read without difficulty by every serious reader. All at least should know his resplendent picture of Pericles, and the Periclean ideal of Athens, an ideal as usual only reached by a few exalted spirits, and by them, but for a moment of glowing inspiration — an ideal of which we have the grotesque obverse in the wild comedies of Aristophanes. All too should know the story of Cleon and of Alcibiades, the terrible scene of the plague at Athens, and the ghastly insurrection at Corcyra, and perhaps the most stirring of all, the overthrow of Athens in the port of Syracuse. I can remember how, when I read that within sight of the heights of Epipolæ and the fountain of Arethusa, it seemed as if the bay around me still rang with the shout of triumph and the wail of the defeated host. It is surely the most dramatic page, yet one of the simplest and most severely impartial and exact, in the whole range of historical literature.

For the remainder of Greek history after the defeat and decline of Athens we have no contemporary authorities of any value, except the *Memoirs* of Xenophon; and for the marvellous career of Alexander, the best is Arrian, who at least had access to the works of eye-witnesses. And thus when we lose the light of Thucydides and Xenophon, we must trust to Plutarch and the later compilers, who had materials that are lost to the modern world.

Between Thucydides and Xenophon the analogy is strange, and the contrast even more strange. Both were Athenians, saturated with Attic culture, both exiles, both unsparing critics of the democracy of their native republic; but the first stood resolute in his proud philosophic neutrality, whilst cherishing the ideal of the country he had lost; the other became a renegade in the Greek fashion, the citizen of his country's natural enemy, and alienated from his own by temperament, in sympathy, and in habits.

When these Athenian philosophers fail us, we had better rely on Curtius and Grote. Both have their great and special merits. And if the twelve volumes of Grote are beyond the range of the ordinary reader with their mountains of detail and microscopic exaggeration of minute incidents and insignificant beings, Curtius in less than a third of the bulk has covered nearly the same ground with a more philosophic conception. Strictly speaking, there is not, and cannot be, a history of Greece. Greece is scattered broadcast over South-eastern Europe and North-western Asia. Greece was not so much a nation as a race, a movement, a language, a school of thought and art. And thus it comes that any history of Greece is utterly inadequate without such books as Müller's or Mahaffy's *Literature of Ancient Greece*, Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art*, Fustel de Coulanges' *Cité Antique*, and Mahaffy's *Social Life in Greece* and *Greek Life and Thought*, or John Addington Symonds' delightful essays on *Greek Poets* and the scenery of Greece.

The twelve volumes of Grote's *History of Greece* are neither manageable nor necessary for any but regular scholars of the original authorities. But there are sections of his work of peculiar value and well within the scope of the general reader. These are: the account of the

Athenian democracy (vol. iv. ch. 31); of the Athenian empire (vol. v. ch. 45); the famous chapters on Socrates and the Sophists (vol. viii. ch. 67, 68), and the account of Alexander's expedition (vol. xii.). For the general description of Greece, Curtius is unrivalled, and in many things he is a valuable corrective of Grote's pedantic radicalism. But it is a serious drawback to Curtius as a historian that with his purist Hellenic sympathies he treats the history of Greece as closed by Philip of Macedon, whereas in one sense it may be said that the history of a nation then only begins. The histories of Greece too often end with the death of Demosthenes, or the death of Alexander, though Freeman and Mahaffy have shown that neither the intellect nor the energy of the Greek race was at all exhausted. The German work of Holm, pronounced by Mahaffy to be amongst the very best, will soon be open to the English reader.

The historians of Rome, with two exceptions, are too diffuse, or too fragmentary: such mere epitomes or such uncritical compilations, that they have no such value for the general reader as the great historians of Greece. Yet there are few more memorable pages in history than are some of the best bits from the delightful story-teller Livy. We cannot trust his authority; he has no pretence to critical judgment or the philosophic mind. He is no painter of character; nor does he ever hold us spellbound with a profound thought, or a monumental phrase. But his splendid vivacity and pictorial colour, the epic fulness and continuity of his vast composition, the glowing patriotism and martial enthusiasm of his majestic theme, impress the imagination with peculiar force. It is a prose Æneid — the epic of the Roman commonwealth from Æneas to Augustus. It is inspired with all the patriotic fire of Virgil and with more than Horatian delight in the simple virtues of the olden time. For the first time a great writer devoted a long life to record the continuous growth of his nation over a period of eight centuries, in order to do honour to his country's career and to teach lessons of heroism to a feebler generation. Had we the whole of this stupendous work, we should perhaps more fully respect the originality as well as the grandeur of this truly Roman conception.

One of the abiding sorrows of literature is the loss of the 107 books, out of the 142 which composed the entire series. They were complete down to the seventh century: now we have to be content with the 'epitomes,' or general table of contents. But 35 books, a little short of one quarter of the whole, have reached us. In these times of special research and critical purism, the merits of Livy are forgotten in the mass of his glaring defects. Uncritical he is, uninquiring even, nay, almost ostentatiously indifferent to exact fact or chronological reality. He seems deliberately to choose the most picturesque form of each narrative without any regard to its truth; nay, he is too idle to consult the authentic records within reach. But we are carried away by the enthusiasm and stately eloquence of his famous *Preface:* we forgive him the mythical account of the foundation of Rome for the beauty and heroic simplicity of the primitive legends, and the immortal pictures of the early heroes, kings, chiefs, and dictators. Where the facts of history are impossible to discover, it is something to have epic tales which have moved all later ages. And we may more surely trust his narrative of the Punic wars, which is one of the most fascinating episodes in the roll of the Muse of History.

She is still weeping bitter and silent tears for a loss even greater from the side of scientific record of the past. The Romanised Greek, Polybius, a thinker and patriot worthy of an older time, the wise and cultured friend of the second Scipio, wrote the history of Rome in forty books, for the seventy-four years of her history, from the origin of the second Punic war to the end of the third and the final overthrow of Carthage. It was the crisis in the fortunes of Rome, one of the most crucial turning-points in the history of the world. And it found a historian, who was statesman, philosopher, and man of learning, curiously well placed to collect trustworthy materials, and peculiarly endowed for just and independent judgment. In all the qualities of a historian but one, no other Greek but Thucydides can be placed beside him. But five of his forty books remain entire. His dry and prosaic method has cost him immortality and robbed us of all but a small remnant of this most precious record. Of all great historians he is the one most wanting in fire and in grace. If we would contrast the work of a mighty master of narrative with that of a scrupulous annalist, we may read the famous scene in the Carthaginian senate, when the second Punic war is declared to the ambassadors of Rome, as it is told by Polybius, and then turn to the same story in the stirring pages of Livy.

It is the fashion now to neglect Plutarch ; to our fathers of the last three centuries he was almost the mainstay of historical knowledge. His Greek is poor ; his manner gossipy ; his method uncritical ; and his credulity unlimited. But he belongs himself to the ancient world that he describes. He is an ancient describing the look of the ancient heroes to us moderns. He was a moralist, not a historian, a painter of characters rather than a narrator of events. But with all this, Plutarch's forty-six *Parallel Lives* have a special value of their own. We must look on them as the spontaneous moralising of a fine old polytheistic preacher, recounting with enthusiasm the deeds of the famous chiefs of Greece and Rome; full of superstitious tales, traditional anecdotes, loose hearsay — by no means exact and critical history. The classical enthusiasm of the eighteenth century was nursed upon Plutarch's *Lives.* In his simple pages the genius of the ancient world stands out in living reality. One who knew his Plutarch would understand the genius of Greece and Rome better than if he knew a hundred German monographs.

It is one of the cruel bereavements of Humanity that of his *Lives* no less than fourteen are lost; those of the foremost types of the ancient world. We have lost that of Epaminondas, the noblest of the Greeks, and of Scipio, the noblest of the old patrician chiefs. We have lost the life of Julius, and of all the earlier emperors; and, perhaps worst of all, we have lost the life of Trajan, the greatest of the emperors: the emperor whom Plutarch knew in life, and of whose majestic life and empire we have the scantiest record of all. It is a melancholy and interesting coincidence that Trajan, one of the grandest figures of the ancient world, to whom Plutarch dedicated one of his works, is almost unknown to us, though he may have been himself familiar with the *Parallel Lives.* History has strangely neglected to record the acts of one of the noblest of all rulers and the events of one of the most typical of all ages — mainly, it would seem, because his genius had given to his age such peace, well-being, and unbroken security.

Although so large a part of Roman history is known to us only through Greek writers, Rome produced at least one historian who may be set beside Thucydides himself. Tacitus was a philosopher, who, if inferior to Thucydides in calm judgment and insight into the compound forces of an entire age, was even greater than Thucydides as a master of expression and in his insight into the complex involutions of the human heart. The literature of history has nothing to compare with his gallery of portraits, with his penetration into character, his tragic bursts of indignation, his judicial sarcasms, and his noble elevation of soul. As a painter of character in a few memorable words, Thomas Carlyle alone amongst historians comes near him. But Tacitus is vastly superior in monumental brevity, in reticence, in simplicity, and in dignity. There are pages of Tacitus, where we must go to Shakespeare himself, to Molière, Cervantes, Swift, or one of the great masters of character, to find the like of these dramatic strokes and living portraiture.

Tacitus, it is true, presents us in his *Histories* and *Annals* with the inner, that is, the Roman side of the empire alone. And we must correct his view with that of the provinces — Gaul, Spain, Britain, as seen by the larger and wider world of the West which was absorbing Rome in ways little intelligible to the proud Roman himself. And Tacitus' strange parody of the history of the Jews may serve to remind us how apt is the wisest believer in his own type of civilisation to be blind to the new moral forces which are gathering up to destroy it. Of Tacitus we now have an excellent English version (Church and Brodribb, 3 vols., 1868–1877); and all solid readers who care for great historical pictures may know the trenchant judgment on the empire under Augustus and Tiberius, the noble portraits of Germanicus and of Agricola, and above all his masterly account of the German races, our sole documentary record of the first stages in the civilisation of our Teutonic ancestors.

It is of course necessary to have some continuous summary of the history of Greece and Rome. We have already spoken of the general manuals of Heeren and of Rawlinson. For Greece, those who find Bishop Thirlwall's scholarly and sensible work too long, may content themselves with the summary of Dr. Smith or Sir W. Cox. For Rome we have the admirable manual of Dean Merivale (*General History of Rome*, 1875) which condenses the history of 1200 years in 600 pages. For the career of Julius Cæsar and the foundation of the dictatorship which became the Roman empire, all should read the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Mommsen's *History of Rome*, in the fourth volume of the English translation.

For the ancient world we have several well-known and familiar works, which take us into the heart of its political, military, and intellectual life: — Xenophon's *Memoir of Socrates*, Arrian's *Persian Expedition of Alexander*, compiled in imperial times from original sources, Cæsar's *Commentaries*, and Cicero's *Letters to his Friends*. Xenophon, the fastidious and ambitious soldier who forsook Athens for Sparta, has given us the most faithful picture of Socrates, which is a revelation of the intellectual aspect of 'the eye of Greece' in the great age. Arrian compiled from the memoirs of eye-witnesses a truthful and complete picture of one of the most wonderful episodes in the history of mankind — the conquest of the East by the King of Macedon. Cæsar was almost as great in letters as he was in war. His account of the *Conquest of Gaul*, one of the great pivots of general history, was famous from its first appearance for the exquisite purity of its language, its masterly precision of truthfulness, its noble simplicity and heroic brevity. It has served all after ages as the first Latin text-book, and describes for us one of the most memorable episodes in history, recounted by its principal actor, himself the greatest name in the history of mankind. We need not be admirers of Cicero as a man, nor partial to his type of eloquence, to enjoy the graceful gossip of his familiar correspondence, with its wonderful picture of the modern side of Roman civilisation.

No rational understanding of history is possible without attention to geography and a distinct hold on the local scene of the great events. Nor again can we to any advantage follow the political, without a knowledge of the æsthetic and practical life of any ancient people. For the geography we need *Spruner's Atlas*, or Freeman's *Historical Geography*, Wordsworth's or Mahaffy's *Travels in Greece*, the first chapter of Curtius' *History of Greece.* Dr. Smith's *Dictionaries of Antiquities and of Biography*, A. S. Murray's *History of Sculpture*, or Lübke's *History of Art*, Middleton's *Rome*, Dyer's *Pompeii*, and our museums may serve for art.

It is no personal paradox, but the judgment of all competent men, that the *Decline and Fall* of Gibbon is the most perfect historical composition that exists in any language: at once scrupulously faithful in its facts; consummate in its literary art; and comprehensive in analysis of the forces affecting society over a very long and crowded epoch. In eight moderate volumes, of which every sentence is compacted of learning and brimful of thought, and yet every page is as fascinating as romance, this great historian has condensed the history of the civilised world over the vast period of fourteen centuries — linking the ancient world to the modern, the Eastern world to the Western, and marshalling in one magnificent panorama the contrasts, the relations, and the analogies of all. If Gibbon has not the monumental simplicity of Thucydides, or the profound insight of Tacitus, he has performed a feat which neither has attempted. 'Survey mankind,' says our poet, 'from China to Peru!' And our historian surveys mankind from Britain to Tartary, from the Sahara to Siberia, and weaves for one-third of all recorded time the epic of the human race.

Half the hours we waste over desultory memoirs of very minor personages and long-drawn biographies of mere mutes on the mighty stage of our world, would enable us all to know our *Decline and Fall*, the most masterly survey of an immense epoch ever elaborated by the brain of man. There is an old saying that over the portal of Plato's Academy it was written, 'Let no one enter here, till he is master of geometry.' So we might imagine the ideal School of History to have graven on its gates, 'Let none enter here, till he has mastered Gibbon.' Those who find his eight crowded volumes beyond their compass might at least know his famous first three chapters, the survey of the Roman empire down to the age of the Antonines; his seventeenth chapter on Constantine and the establishment of Christianity; the reign of Theodosius (ch. 32–34); the conversion of the Barbarians (ch. 37); the kingdom of Theodoric (ch. 39); the reign of Justinian (ch. 40, 41, 42); with the two famous chapters on Roman Law (ch. 43, 44). If we add others, we may take the career of Charlemagne (ch. 49); of Mahomet (ch. 50, 51); the Crusades (ch. 58, 59, which are not equal to the first-mentioned); the rise of the Turks (ch. 64, 65); the last siege of Constantinople (ch. 68); and the last chapters on the city of Rome (69, 70, 71).

Gibbon takes us into mediæval history, but he is by no means sufficient as a guide in it. The mediæval period is certainly difficult to arrange. In the first place, it has a double aspect — Feudalism and Catholicism — the organisation of the Fief and Kingdom, and the organisation of the Church. In the next place, these two great types of social organisation are extended over Europe from the Clyde to the Morea of Greece, embracing thousands of baronies, duchies, and kingdoms, each with a common feudal and a common ecclesiastical system, but with distinct local unity and an independent national and provincial history. The facts of mediæval history are thus infinite and inextricably entangled with each other; the details are often obscure and usually unimportant, whilst the common character is striking and singularly uniform.

The true plan is to go to the fountain-head, and, at whatever trouble, read the best typical book of the age at first hand — if not in the original, in some adequate translation. I select a few of the most important: — Eginhardt's *Life of Charles the Great; The Saxon Chronicle;* Asser's *Life of Alfred,* which is at least drawn from contemporary sources; William of Tyre's and Robert the Monk's *Chronicle of the Crusades;* Geoffrey Vinsauf; Joinville's *Life of St. Louis;* Suger's *Life of Louis the Fat;* St. Bernard's Life and Sermons (see J. C. Morison's *Life*); Froissart's *Chronicle;* De Commines' *Memoirs;* and we may add as a picture of manners, *The Paston Letters.*

But with this we must have some general and continuous history. And in the multiplicity of facts, the variety of countries, and the multitude of books, the only possible course for the general reader who is not a professed student of history is to hold on to the books which give us a general survey on a large scale. Limiting my remarks, as I purposely do, to the familiar books in the English language to be found in every library, I keep to the household works that are always at hand. It is only these which give us a view sufficiently general for our purpose. The recent books are sectional and special: full of research into particular epochs and separate movements. It is true that the older books have been to no small extent superseded, or at least corrected by later historical researches. They no longer exactly represent the actual state of historical learning. They need not a little to supplement them, and something to correct them. Yet their place has not been by any means adequately filled. At any rate they are real and permanent *literature.* They fill the imagination and strike root into the memory. They form the mind ; they become indelibly imprinted on our conceptions. They live : whilst erudite and tedious researches too often confuse and disgust the general reader. To the 'historian,' perhaps, it matters as little in what form a book is written, as it matters in what leather it is bound. Not so to the general reader. To teach him at all, one must fill his mind with impressive ideas. And this can only be done by true literary art. For these reasons I make bold to claim a still active attention for the old familiar books which are too often treated as obsolete to-day.

There are four books on mediæval history from which the last generation learned much ; though we can hardly count any of them amongst the great books of history. Hallam's *Middle Ages* is now seventy-five years old ; Guizot's *Lectures on Civilisation in Europe* is sixty-five years old ; Michelet's early *History of France* is sixty years old ; and Dean Milman's *Latin Christianity* is forty years old. They are all books that cannot be neglected ; even though it is true that modern research has proved them to have not a few shortcomings and some positive errors. Yet withal, I know no books in familiar use, from which the general English reader can learn so much of the nature of the Middle Ages as in these.

Guizot's *Lectures on Civilisation*, in spite of its sixty-five years, in spite of the recent additions to all that we know of the origin of the feudal world, of mediæval law and custom, of mediæval sovereignty, still remains the most valuable short conspectus of the mediæval system which the general reader has. His essay was the earliest attempt to explain by real historical research the great services to civilisation of the feudal monarchy and the Catholic Church, which Chateaubriand, Walter Scott, De

Maistre, and Manzoni had already embodied in romantic episodes or in trenchant controversy. It is of prime importance for the historian to be conversant with the affairs of state, or at least to pass his life amidst politicians and practical chiefs. This is the strength of Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, Livy, Tacitus, De Commines, and we may almost add Hume and Gibbon. But amongst modern historians there is no more conspicuous example of this than Guizot, a large part of whose life was passed in office and in the Chamber. He writes of Charlemagne, St. Louis, and Philip the Fair, like a man who has had charge of the destinies of a great nation. A work of real historical insight may be supplemented or corrected by later research. But no industry in the examination of documents will ever make a useful compilation into a great book of history.

Hallam's *Middle Ages* first appeared in 1818, and with Guizot's *Lectures on Civilisation in Europe*, ten years later, created an epoch in historical study. But Hallam continued to labour on his first work for thirty years and more of his long life; and the complete shape of the *Middle Ages* dates from 1848. Since then much has been added to our knowledge, especially as to the organisation of feudal relations, both in town and country, in the history of the English constitution, and the land-system at home and abroad. But no book has filled the whole space occupied by Hallam with his breadth of view and patient comparative method. At present, perhaps, the most valuable portions of his work are the first four chapters on France, Italy, and Spain, and the concluding chapter on the state of society, much of which, it is true, may now be corrected by later research. The account of Germany is much better read in Mr. Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, that of the church in Dean Milman, and that of the English constitution in Bishop Stubbs. One of the main wants of historical literature now is a book on the Middle Ages which should cover the whole of Europe, in its intellectual, its spiritual, and its political side, with all the knowledge that we have gained from the researches of the last fifty years. Unhappily, it seems as if history were condemned to the rigid limits of special periods, as if the philosophic grasp were pronounced to be obsolete by indefatigable research.

Michelet's *History of France* down to Francis I., although it is a collection of brilliant *pensées*, *caractères*, and *aperçus* rather than a continuous history, is a fine and stirring work of special value to the English reader. It is now sixty years old; but a century will not destroy its living inspiration. Hallam, the very antithesis of Michelet, one who was never once betrayed into an epigram or fired into poetry, has acknowledged in fit language the beauty and vigour of his French competitor. There are magnificent chapters on the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries; and his picture of physical France, his story of Charles the Great, of Louis the Fat, Philip Augustus, St. Louis, Philip the Fair, of the Crusades, the Albigenses, the Communes, his chapters on Gothic architecture, on the English wars, and especially on Jeanne Darc, are unsurpassed in the pages of modern historical literature. Michelet has some of the moral passion and insight into character of Tacitus, no little of the picturesque colour of Carlyle, and more than the patriotic glow of Livy. Alas! had he only something of the patient reserve of Thucydides, the simplicity and precision of Cæsar, the learning and harmonious completeness of Gibbon! He is a poet, a moralist, a preacher, rather than a historian in the modern sense of the word. Yet with all his shortcomings (and his later work has but flashes of his old force), Michelet's picture of mediæval France will long remain an indispensable book.

Dean Milman's *Latin Christianity*, which appeared forty years ago, just misses, it may be, being one of 'the great books of history'—but will long hold its own as an almost necessary complement to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall.* It was avowedly designed as its counterpart, its rival, and in one sense its antidote. And we cannot deny that this aim has been, to a great extent, attained. It covers almost exactly the same epoch; it tells the same story; its chief characters are the same as in the work of Gibbon. But they are all viewed from another point of view and are judged by a different standard. Although the period is the same, the personages the same, and even the incidents are usually common to both histories, the subject is different, and the plot of the drama is abruptly contrasted. Gibbon recounts the dissolution of a vast system: Milman recounts the development of another vast system: first the victim, then the rival, and ultimately the successor of the first. Gibbon tells us of the decline and fall of the Roman empire: Milman narrates the rise and constitution of the Catholic Church—the religious and ecclesiastical, the moral and intellectual movements which sprang into full maturity as the political empire of Rome passed through its long transformation of a thousand years. The scheme and ground-plan of Milman are almost perfect. Had he the prodigious learning, the superhuman accuracy of Gibbon, that infallible good sense, that perennial humour, that sense of artistic proportion, the Dean might have rivalled the portly ex-captain of yeomanry, the erudite recluse in his Swiss retreat. He may not be quite strong enough for his giant's task. But no one else has even essayed to bend the bow which the Ulysses of Lausanne hung up on one memorable night in June 1787 in his garden study;

none has attempted to recount the marvellous tale of the consolidation of the Christianity of Rome over the whole face of Western Europe during a clear period of a thousand years.

The whole of the closely-packed six volumes of *Latin Christianity* are possibly beyond the limits of many general readers. But we can point to those parts which may be best selected from the rest. The *Introduction* in the first book, and the *General Survey* which forms the fourteenth book at the end of the work, are the parts of the whole of the widest general grasp. To these we may add the chapters which treat of the greater Popes: Leo the Great in Book ii., Gregory the Great in Book iii., Hildebrand in Book vii., Innocent the Third in Book ix., Boniface VIII. in Book xi. — the chapters on Theodoric, Charlemagne, the Othos, the Crusades, St. Bernard, St. Louis — those on the four Latin Fathers, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory, the monastic orders of St. Benedict, St. Dominic, and St. Francis — the Conversion of the Barbarians, and the Reformers and Councils of the fifteenth century. As is natural and fortunate, the Dean is strongest and most valuable just where Gibbon is weakest or even misleading.

In his Library, Auguste Comte recommended as the complement of Gibbon, the *Ecclesiastical History* of the Abbé Fleury. But it seems in vain to press upon the general reader of English a work in French so bulky, so unfamiliar, and so far removed from us in England to-day both in date, in form, and in tone. It was published in 1690, more than two hundred years ago, and is in twenty volumes quarto, and only in part translated into English. It contains an excellent narrative, which was warmly praised by Voltaire. But it is entirely uncritical; it is of course not on the level of modern scholarship; and as the work of a prelate under the later reign of Louis XIV., it is naturally composed from the theological and miraculous point of view. The Abbé gives us the view of the Catholic world as seen by a sensible and liberal Catholic divine in the seventeenth century. The Dean has painted it as imagined by a somewhat sceptical and Protestant man of the world in the nineteenth.

When we pass from Mediæval to Modern History, we are confronted with the difficulty that modern history is infinitely the more intricate and varied, and that, as we advance, the histories become continually more and more devoted to special epochs and countries, and are minute researches into local incidents and chosen persons. The immediate matter in hand in this essay is to direct attention to *great books* of history, meaning thereby those works which take us to the inner life of one of the great typical movements, or which in manageable form survey some of the great epochs of general history. Such surveys for the last four centuries are exceedingly rare. There are many valuable standard works, which are supposed to be in every gentleman's library, and which are familiar enough to every historical student. But they form a list that can hardly be compressed into one hundred volumes, and to master them is beyond the power of the average general reader to whom these pages are addressed. We can mention some of them: though they are hardly 'great books,' and neither in range of subject, in charm, or in insight, have they the stamp of Herodotus or Gibbon.

I am accustomed to recommend as a general summary the *Outline of Modern History* by Jules Michelet. It is unsurpassed in clearness and general arrangement. It begins with the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, and has been well translated and continued to our own day by Mrs. W. Simpson. I am also old-fashioned enough to rely on the *Manual* of a great historian,—

Heeren's *Political System of Europe* which covers almost exactly the same ground, — though it is now more than eighty years old, not easily procurable in the English form, and avowedly restricted to the political relations of the European States. But its concise and masterly grouping, its good sense and just proportion, make it the model of a summary of a long and intricate period. But we must not ask more from it than it professes to give us. We shall look from it in vain for any account of the revolution directed by Cromwell or of the culture that gave splendour to the early years of Louis XIV.

Summaries and manuals are of course made for students, and it would be vain to expect the general reader, who is not about to be 'extended' on the 'mark-system,' and who, tired with work, takes up a volume at his fireside, to commit to memory the dates and subdivisions which are the triumph of the examiner and the despair of the practical man. Records and summaries there must be, if only for reference and general clearness of heads. We must to some extent group our periods; and, without pretending to very minute details, the following may serve for practical purposes, and are those which are commonly adopted: —

1. The formation of the European monarchies and the rise of the modern State-System.
2. The revival of learning and the intellectual movement known as the Renascence. This is synchronous with, and related to, the first mentioned.
3. The Reformation and the great religious wars down to the middle of the seventeenth century.
4. The dynastic, territorial, and colonial struggles from the Peace of Westphalia to the close of the Seven Years' War.

5. The struggle against autocracy in (*a*) Holland in the sixteenth century; (*b*) England in the seventeenth century; (*c*) America in the eighteenth century. This is a special phase of the general movements noted as 3 and 4.
6. The Revolution of the eighteenth century and its political, social, and industrial effects.

We will take each of these *six* movements in their order:—

I. For the first we have a book of established fame, now well entered on its second century, which still lives by virtue of its high powers of generalisation, its pellucid style, and sureness of judgment — Robertson's *Charles V.* In spite of the development of research in the last one hundred and thirty years, the famous *Introduction* or *Survey of Europe* from the fall of the Roman empire to the fifteenth century remains an indispensable book, the appendix, as it were, and philosophic completion of *The Decline and Fall.*

The volume on the Middle Ages is indeed one of those permanent and synthetic works which have been almost driven out of modern libraries by the growth of special studies, but it belongs to that order of general histories of which we are now so greatly in need. For the consolidation of States in Italy we must resort to Sismondi's *Italian Republics*, of which there is a small English abridgment; for that of France to Michelet; for Spain to Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella;* and for England to Hallam's *Constitutional History of England;* this, though fifty years have much impaired its value, still holds the field by its judicial balance of mind. For later authorities we must turn to the general *Histories of England* of J. R. Green and of Dr. F. Bright. But we can point to no work save that of Robertson which in one general view will give us the history of Europe in the sixteenth century.

II. For the Renascence of Learning and Art, we have no better exponents than Burckhardt, Michelet, and Symonds. The German is full of learning and sound judgment; the Frenchman has a single volume of wonderful brilliancy and passion; the Englishman has produced a long series of works charged with learning and almost overloaded with ingenious criticism and superabundant illustration. But the Renascence is best studied in the biographies of its leaders, Lorenzo de' Medici, Columbus, Bruno, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Rabelais, Erasmus, Ariosto, and Calderon — in the great paintings, buildings, inventions, and poems — in such books as those of Cellini, More, Montaigne, and Cervantes. A movement so subtle, so diffused, so complex can have no history. But its spirit has been caught and embalmed by Michelet in some hundred pages of almost continuous epigram and poetry. A sort of *catalogue raisonnée* presenting its versatile and ingenious force may be best collected from a study of Hallam's great work — *The Literature of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.*

III. For the Reformation we rely on Ranke's *History of the Popes*, especially for Germany. For England the history has been adequately told both by Green and by Froude; for Holland by Motley; for France by Michelet. It is here of course that the most violent partisanship comes in to disturb the tranquil judgment-seat of history. History becomes controversy rather than record. The Catholic will consult the splendid polemical invective of Bossuet — *The Variations of Protestantism.* The Protestant will rely on the vehement impeachment of Merle D'Aubigné.

IV. The dynastic, territorial, and colonial struggles from the Peace of Westphalia to the close of the Seven Years' War have been well summarised by Heeren in his *Political System*, by Michelet in his summary of *Modern History*, and by Duruy in his *Histoire des Temps Modernes.* There is no book which can be said to enter into literature and gives an adequate picture of this period, unless it be Voltaire's *Age of Louis* XIV. *and Louis* XV. Lord Stanhope's *Histories of Queen Anne* and of *England*, Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, H. Martin's *Histoire de France*, Lecky's excellent *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, are standard works for this period; but they are all far too voluminous, too special, and diffuse for the purposes of the general reader, nor do they enter into the scheme of the present essay.

V. Nor again is it possible to put into the hands of the general reader of English any single work which will give an adequate conception of the successive struggles for freedom in Holland, England, and America. They must be read in the separate histories, of which there are some that are excellent, though all of a formidable length and bulk. The nine volumes which Motley devoted in his three works on the struggle in Holland, the three works of Guizot on the English Revolution and its leaders, the standard work of Bancroft on the United States, form a series beyond the resources of the mere general reader as distinct from the student.

There are, however, three works which, whilst being in form and in bulk within the compass of the average reader, give adequate portraits of the three noble chiefs of the Dutch, the English, and the American revolutions. Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches of Cromwell*, and Washington Irving's *Life of*

Washington, are all indispensable books to one who desires to know the work of three of the great heroes of the Protestant republics. And these three are peculiarly suited for the biographical method. For not only were they each the undoubted chiefs of great historic movements, but they were all three men of singularly pure and magnanimous life, who each embodied the highest type of the age which they inspired.

Carlyle's *Cromwell* has definitely formed the view that Englishmen take of their own history and even their view of their political system. It is one of the most splendid monuments of historical genius, for it reversed the false judgment which, for two centuries, political and religious bigotry had passed on the greatest ruler that these islands ever knew, and formally enthroned him on the love and admiration of all thinking men. It is needful to bear in mind that this great work is not a *Life of Cromwell;* it was not so designed; it is not so in result. It is the materials annotated for a biography of Cromwell which Carlyle never wrote, and which is yet to be written. And it is essential to have alongside of this masterpiece of industry and genius, a continuous history of the whole period from the accession of Charles I. to that of William III. With all its defects, we shall find that told in the two works of Guizot — *The History of the English Revolution* and the *Life of Cromwell* — as they appear in two volumes in the English version. From the enormous detail of Mr. Gardiner's works on the period, and their still incomplete state, the general reader will be content to trust to the fine narrative as we read it in Green's *Short History.* If we hesitate to add to his *Cromwell* Mr. Carlyle's *Friedrich the Second*, it is on account of its preposterous length, its interminable digressions, its trivial personalities and tedious scandal; because, with all its amazing literary brilliancy, it entirely omits to give us any conception of Frederick as a creative civil statesman, — though this is the character in which after ages will principally honour him.

VI. For the Revolution of 1789 we have the wonderful book of Carlyle, perhaps the most striking extant example of the poetical method applied to history. It is an enduring book; and it has now passed into its sixth decade and that immortality which, by copyright law, enables the public to buy it for a shilling. The poetical and pictorial method too often ends in caricature and gives tempting occasions for telling portraiture. And both in his loves and his hates, Carlyle has too often proved to be extravagant or unjust, and sometimes flatly mistaken in his facts. With all its shortcomings it is a great book: which, in literary skill, has not been surpassed by any prose of our century, and which, as historical judgment, has deeply modified the social and political ideas of our age. But as for the *Cromwell* we need a complement, if not a corrective, so we need it far more for the *French Revolution.* We may find it in Von Sybel's or in Michelet's *French Revolution*, or, better still, in the clear, judicial, and just summary of Mignet. For the history of the Great War, we may turn to the abridged edition of Sir Archibald Alison's in a single volume, as fairly adequate and satisfactory. This avoids nearly all his besetting faults, and contains a very fair share of his undoubted merits. A far superior book, which takes in the whole period from 1792 to 1848, is the *History of Modern Europe* by the late A. C. Fyffe, too early lost to historical literature.

For the growth of our social and industrial life in the present century — a subject of cardinal importance which must practically determine our political sympathies — it is too obvious that no adequate general account exists.

Perhaps in the whole range of historical literature no book is more urgently needed than a real history of the development of industry and social existence in Europe in the present century. The movement itself is European rather than national, and social and economic rather than political. In the meantime we have no other resource except to follow up this complex evolution of modern society, both locally and sectionally. Of the various extant histories, the most important is Harriet Martineau's *History of England from the Peace of* 1815; perhaps the most generally interesting is Charles Knight's *Popular History of England*, the later portions of which are less superficial and elementary than the earlier. The modern English histories of Spencer Walpole, Justin M'Carthy, and W. N. Molesworth are fair, honest, and pleasant to read.

In these few notes on great books of history, it does not lie in my plan to say much about national or special histories. From my own point of view the life of Humanity in its fulness is the central aim of sound knowledge; and that which substitutes the national for the human interest, that which withdraws the attention from organic civilisation to special incidents, has been long too closely followed. There is always a tendency to concentrate the interest on national history; and it needs no further stimulus. Nor are the details of our national history ever likely to pall on the intelligent reader. But histories on such a scale, that each octavo volume records but a year or two, and takes nearly as long to compose: on such a canvas, that every person who crosses the stage and each incident that occurs within the focus of the instrument, is recorded, not in the degree of its importance, but in the degree of the bulk that the accessible materials may fill — whatever may be their value, are beyond the purport of this chapter.

The only aim of the present piece is to suggest to a busy man a few books in which he may catch some conception of the central lines of human evolution. A true philosophy of human progress (if we could find it) would be a practical manual of life and conduct : and of such a philosophy, history in the larger sense must be the bible and basis. Mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, not as historical romance to pass a few idle hours, but as the revelation of the slow and interrupted, but unceasing development of the organism of which we are cells and germs. What we need to know are the leading lines of this mighty biography, the moral and social links that bind us to the series of our ancestors in the Past. The great truth which marks the science of our time is the sense of unity in the course of civilisation, and of organic evolution in its gradual growth. To gain a conception of this course we must set ourselves in a manly way to study, not the picture books of history, but the classical works as they came from the master hands of the great historians. Wherever it is possible we must go to the original sources, being sure that no story is ever so faithful as that told by those who themselves saw the great deed and heard the voices of the great men.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORY SCHOOLS.

An Oxford Dialogue.[1]

On one of those bright misty days at Oxford, when the grey towers are dimly seen rising from masses of amber and russet foliage, when reading men enjoy a brisk walk in the keen afternoon air, to talk over the feats of the Long and the chances of the coming Schools, a tutor and a freshman were striding round the meadows of Christ Church. The Reverend Æthelbald Wessex, called by undergraduates 'the Venerable Bede,' was taking a tutorial grind with his young friend, Philibert Raleigh, who had come up from Eton with a brilliant record. The Admirable Crichton, as Phil was named by his admirers, was expected to do great things in the History School: his essay had won him the scholarship, and even the Master admitted that he had read some which were worse. Phil was enlarging on the lectures of the new Regius Professor.

'We are in luck,' said he, 'to be reading for the Schools at a time when the Professor is one of the first of living writers; his lectures are a lesson in English literature, instead of a medley of learned "tips."'

'I hope my dear boy,' said the Venerable, 'that you are not referring to the late Professor in that rather superficial remark of yours, for he was certainly one of the most consummate historians of modern times.'

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 54, N.S. October 1893.

'Oh, no,' said Phil, in an apologetic tone; 'I never heard Dr. Freeman lecture at all, and I have not yet finished the third volume of *The Norman Conquest*. But surely he is hardly in it as a writer with Froude, whose history one enjoys to read as one enjoys *Quentin Durward* or *Ivanhoe?*'

'You are giving yourself away, dear boy,' replied the tutor, with his shrewd smile, 'when you class the *History of England* with a novel. Mr. Froude's enemies (and I am certainly not one of them) have never said worse of him than that. I am afraid that the first thing which Oxford will have to teach you is that the business of a historian is to write history, not romance.'

'Of course,' said the freshman, a little put out by the snub, 'I should not compare the *History of England* to romance, nor, I suppose, do you. But we know that all the histories in the world which have permanent life are composed with literary genius, and are delightful to read in themselves. A great historian has to write history, but he also has to write a great book.'

'Literature is one thing,' said the Venerable, in somewhat oracular tones, 'and history is another thing. The τέλος of history is Truth. She may be more attractive to some minds when clothed in shining robes; but the historian has to worship at the shrine of *nuda Veritas*, and it is no business of his to care for the drapery she wears. What I mean is, that history implies indefatigable research into recorded facts. That is the essence: the form is mere accident.'

'The form of the sentences may be a secondary thing,' pleaded the Crichton, 'but, surely, the vivid power of striking home which marks every great book is essential to a history intended to survive. Would the Master have given all that labour to Thucydides if the whole of his work had been occupied with monotonous accounts of how the Spartans marched into Attica, and how the Athenians sent seven ships to the coast of Thrace? Thucydides is a *κτῆμα εἰς ἀεί* because of the elaborate speeches, the account of the plague, the civil war in Corcyra, the siege of Syracuse, and the last sea-fight in the harbour. These are the things which make Thucydides immortal, and remind one of the messenger's speech in the *Persæ*. It is these magnificent pictures of the ancient world which help us to get over the wearisome parade of hoplites and sling-men, and battles of frogs and mice in obscure bays.'

'This will never do,' replied the tutor. 'We shall quite despair of your class, if you begin by calling "wearisome" any fact ascertainable in recorded documents. The business of the historian is to examine the evidence for what has ever happened in any place or time; and nothing which is *true* can be wearisome to the really historical mind.'

'And are we expected to enjoy our *Codex Diplomaticus* as much as our Macaulay and our Froude?'

'We do not ask you to enjoy,' said the Bede, in his dry way, 'we only ask you to know — or, to be quite accurate, to satisfy the examiners. The brilliant apologist of Henry VIII. seems to give you delightful lectures; but I can assure you that the Schools know no other standard but that of accurate research, in the manner so solidly established by the late Regius Professor whom we have lost.'

'Do you think that a thoughtful essay on the typical movements in one's period would not pay?' asked the Admirable one, in a rather anxious tone.

'My young friend,' said the Reverend Ethelbald, 'you will find that dates, authorities, texts, facts, and plenty of diphthongs pay much better. You are in danger of mortal heresy, if you think that anything will show you a royal road to these. If there is one thing which, more than another, is the mark of Oxford to-day, it is belief in contemporary documents, exact testing of authorities, scrupulous verification of citations, minute attention to chronology, geography, palæography, and inscriptions. When all these are right, you cannot go wrong. For all this we owe our gratitude to the great historian we have lost.'

'Oh, yes,' said Phil airily, for he was quite aware that he was thought to be shaky in his pre-Ecgberht chronicles; 'I am not saying a word against accuracy. But all facts are not equally important, nor are all old documents of the same use. I have been grinding all this term at the *History of the Norman Conquest*, verifying all the citations as I go along, and making maps of every place that is named. I have only got to the third volume, you know, and I don't know now what it all comes to. Freeman's West-Saxon scuffles on the downs seem to me duller than Thucydides' fifty hoplites and three hundred sling-men, and I have not yet come to anything to compare with the Syracusan expedition.'

'This is a bad beginning for a history man,' said Bæda. 'Is this how they talked at Eton of the greatest period of the greatest race in the annals of the world? All history centres round the early records of the English in the three or four centuries before the first coming of the Jutes, and the three or four after it. Let me advise you to take as your period, say, the battle of Ellandun, and get up all about it, and how "its stream was choked with slain," and what led up to it and what came after it. Do you know anything more interesting, as you call it, than that?'

'Yes,' said Phil readily, with all the recklessness of a smart freshman; 'why, Ellandun was merely the slogging of savages, of whom we know nothing but a few names. What I call fine history is Macaulay's famous account of the state of England under the Stuarts, or Froude's splendid picture of the trial and execution of Mary of Scots. That is a piece of writing that no one can ever forget.'

'Ah, just so!' said the Venerable, in that awful monosyllabic way which he had caught from the Master; 'splendid picture! — piece of writing! — fine history! — here we generally take "fine history" to be — ah! false history.'

'But fine history need not be false,' said Phil.

'We usually find it so,' replied his tutor, 'and it is ten times worse than false quantities in a copy of longs and shorts. There is no worse offence outside the statute book (and many offences in it are less immoral) than the crime of making up a picture of actual events for the sake of literary effect, with no real care for exact truthfulness of detail. A historical romance, as they call novels of past ages, is often a source of troublesome errors; but, at any rate, in a novel we know what to expect. It is a pity that Scott should talk nonsense about Robin Hood in *Ivanhoe*, and that Bulwer introduced Caxton into the *Last of the Barons*. But no one expects to find truth in such books, and every one reads them at his own peril. In a history of England it is monstrous to be careless about references, and to trust to a late authority.'

'But no decent historian ever does intend to state what he knows to be an error,' said Phil, somewhat surprised at the warmth of the West Saxon's indignation.

'I should think not indeed,' said Wessex; 'no one but a thief intends to take what is not his own, and no one but a liar means to state what he knows to be untrue. But the historian of all men is bound by the sanctities of his office to what we call in Roman law *summa diligentia*. And to be thinking of his "pictures," of the scheme of his colours and other literary effects, forms a most dangerous temptation to adopt the picturesque form of a story in place of the recorded truth. Unfortunately, as we know to our sorrow, the materials of the historian are of almost every sort — good, doubtful, and worthless; the so-called histories go on copying one another, adding something to heighten the lights out of quite second-rate authority; a wrong reference, a false date, a hearsay anecdote gets into accepted histories, and it costs years of labour to get the truth at last. If you ever hope to be a historian, you must treat historical falsehood as you would a mad dog, and never admit a phrase or a name which suggests an untruth.'

'Has not this purism been a little overdone?' said the innocent freshman. 'I remember that Freeman once told us he could not bear to speak of the Battle of Hastings, lest some one should imagine that it began on the seashore.'

'A fine example of scrupulous love of truth,' replied the Bede, 'and I wish that all histories of England had been written in a similar spirit. Can anything be more unscholarly than a readiness to accept a statement which we have not probed to the core, simply because it works up into a telling picture, or will point an effective paragraph? It is positively dishonest! And some of them will quote you a passage which you discover, on collating it with the original, has a blunder in every sentence, and a mistranslation in every page. If you write a romance, you may go to your imagination for your facts. If you write history, you should scrupulously extract the best contemporary record, and throw everything else into the fire. I sometimes wish that histories were not published at all in the current English of literature, but were plain and disconnected propositions of fact, like the cuneiform inscriptions of Daryavush at Behistun.'

'Surely,' cried Phil, with a laugh, 'that would be a little dull! It would be a mere lexicon. No one could get up Facciolati or Littré as we get up Herodotus. Besides, the enormous number of propositions, each of which might fairly be called "truth," would make history impossible even for the most prodigious memory.'

'You forget,' said the tutor, 'that we treat history in "periods" of short or, at any rate, of manageable length. Nobody has any business out of his own "period," and if he trespasses on to another man's "period," he is pretty certain to be caught. The "periods" in our schools are far, far too long, and encourage superficial and flashy habits of reading. I remember dear old Bodley, late Professor of Palæography, who was before your time, saying that ten years in the fourteenth century was about as much as any man should try to master. He died, poor old boy, before his great book was ever got into shape at all; and perhaps ten years is rather short for a distinct period. But it takes a good man to know as much as a century, as it ought to be known. And one of our greatest living masters in history, with enormous industry and perseverance, just manages to write the events of one year in the seventeenth century within each twelve-months of his own laborious life.'

Phil could stand this no longer. With a whoop and a bound (he had just won the long jump in his college sports) he cleared the broad ditch, and alighted clean in the meadow round which they were tramping.

'Why,' he cried, as a second bound brought him back again to the side of his Venerable friend, 'at that rate we should want at least a hundred works, I suppose in ten volumes each, or a thousand volumes in all, cram full of gritty facts of no good to any one. All this week I have been entering in my note-book such bits as this:— "Ecgfrith marched to a place called the Hoar Apple-Tree. It is not known where this is, or why he went there. He left it the next day, and neither he nor it are ever mentioned again in the chronicles." What is the good to me of knowing that?' he asked, as if a cheeky freshman was likely to put the Reverend Æthelbald into a tight place.

'Bad, bad!' said the tutor, who began to fear that he was wasting his time on Phil, 'you will never be a credit to your college if you can make game of "truth" like that! One would think a young man who hoped to do something would care to know a few true facts about his English forbears a thousand years ago. But the question is not what you care to know, but what you ought to know; and every Englishman ought to know every word in the *Saxon Chronicle*, to say nothing of the rest. Nor is it a question at all about your thousand volumes of history, the bulk of which deal with "periods" that do not concern you at all. Your thousand volumes, too, is a very poor estimate after all. You would find that not ten thousand volumes, perhaps not a hundred thousand volumes, would contain all the truths which have ever been recorded in contemporary documents, together with the elucidations, comments, and various amplifications which each separate truth would properly demand.'

'But at this rate,' said the freshman gloomily, 'I shall never get beyond Ecgfrith and the other break-jaw Old-English sloggers. When we come up to Oxford we never seem to get out of an infinite welter of "origins" and primitive forms of everything. I used to think the Crusades, the Renascence, Puritanism, and the French Revolution were interesting epochs or movements. But here lectures seem to go round and round the Mark-system, or the aboriginal customs of the Jutes. We are told that it is mere literary trifling to take any interest in Richelieu and William of Orange, Frederick of Prussia, or Mirabeau and Danton. The history of these men has been adequately treated in very brilliant books which a serious student must avoid. He must stick to Saxon charters and the Doomsday Survey.'

'Of course, he must,' said the tutor, 'if that is his "period"—and a very good period it is. If you know how many houses were inhabited at Dorchester and Bridport at the time of the Survey, and how many there had been in the Old-English time, you know something definite. But you may write pages of stuff about what smatterers call the "philosophy of history," without a single sentence of solid knowledge. When every inscription and every manuscript remaining has been copied and accurately unravelled, then we may talk about the philosophy of history.'

'But surely,' said Crichtonius mirabilis, 'you don't wish me to believe that there is no intelligible evolution in the ages, and that every statement to be found in a chronicle is as much worth remembering as any other statement?'

'You have got to remember them all,' replied the Reverend Æthelbald dogmatically, 'at any rate, all in your "period." You may chatter about "evolution" as fast as you like, if you take up Physical Science and go to that beastly museum; but if you mention "evolution" in the History School, you will be gulfed—take my word for it! I daresay that all statements of fact—*true* statements I mean—may not be of equal importance; but it is far too early yet to attempt to class them in order of value. Many generations of scholars will have to succeed each other, and many libraries will have to be filled, before even our bare materials will be complete and ready for any sort of comparative estimate. All that you have to do, dear boy, is to choose your period (I hope it will be Old-English somewhere), mark out your "claim," as Californian miners do, and then wash your lumps, sift, crush quartz, till you find ore, and don't cry "Gold!" till you have had it tested.'

This was a hard saying to his Admirable young friend, who felt like the rich young man in the Gospel when he was told to sell all that he had and to follow the Master. 'I have no taste for quartz-crushing,' said he gloomily; 'what I care for are Jules Michelet on the Middle Ages, Macaulay's pictures of Charles II. and his court — (wonderful scene that, the night of Charles's seizure at Whitehall!) — Carlyle on Mirabeau and Danton, and Froude's Reformation and Armada. These are the books which stir my blood. Am I to put all these on the shelf?'

'Certainly! put them away this very day till you have got your class and have gone on a yachting holiday: when you may put them in your cabin with Scott and Dumas,' said the Venerable, in his archiepiscopal manner. 'Let me advise you not to waste your precious hours with novels. Michelet, with his stale Victor-Hugo epigrams and his absurd references to the *Bibliothèque Nationale — Cabinet de Versailles — portrait du Louvre* — as if that was serious history. You might as well put the *Trois Mousquetaires* in your list of books in the History School. Macaulay is all very well and a real reader, of course; but he had always one eye on his sentences, and he would almost misquote a manuscript for the sake of a smart antithesis. There is far too much about French harlots; but the worst vice of his book is, that it is amusing, which is the only real fault in Gibbon. Carlyle is good on Cromwell, though he is dreadfully prejudiced; he had never seen the Clark Papers and consequently he has to be put right on a hundred points. And as to his *French Revolution*, it reads to me like an extract from Rabelais; and what on earth can you have to do with the Encyclopædists, Girondins, Mountain, and *Sans-culottes?*'

'Why, Oscar at Eton used to tell us, that no part of history was more essential than all that led up to the Revolution of 1789, and all that has led down from it to our present day, and John Morley says the same,' replied the unhappy fresher.

'Oscar's a radical and John is a terrorist,' replied the Venerable, quite annoyed at the lad's pertinacity and his shallow turn of mind. 'The French Revolution is the happy hunting-ground of all the phrase-mongers like Carlyle, the doctrinaires like Louis Blanc, the epigrammatists like Michelet and Taine, and the liars like Thiers and Lamartine. There is no history to be got out of it for a century or two, till all the manuscripts have been deciphered and all the rubbish that has been published is forgotten.'

'Well, but come,' said Phil stoutly, in his last ditch, 'you will not bar Froude, who made up his history at Simancas, and got all his facts from unpublished manuscripts?'

'Simancas! Facts! Oh, oh!' laughed the Reverend Æthelbald, with his grim West-Saxon chuckle. 'Simancas indeed! where, what, how much? what volume or what bundle, what page, and what folio? *MSS. penes me*—is a very convenient reference, but historians require a little more detail than this. I am not going to say one word against the Regius Professor, who is an old friend of mine and has written some very beautiful pieces; but, when you talk about "facts," I must put you on your guard. If you never read the *Saturday Review* on Froude's *Becket*, you had better do so at once. They were telling a good story in Common Room the other day about the reviewer. He hated music, and so when he intended to send a smasher to the *Saturday*, he got some one to play him "The Battle of Prague," or the "Carnaval de Venise," which would make him dancing mad, till you could hear the old lion's tail lashing his sides. I never went into the references myself — it is not in my period — but all I say is this — that *if* the references and citations are as full of mistakes as the *Saturday* said (mind you, I only say *if* — for I take no part in the quarrel), it is worse than picking a pocket. People may wonder how it is possible for such things to be done by a dear old man whom we all love, who is the soul of honour in private life, and who says such beautiful things about religion, morality, and the ethics of statesmen. Well! I don't know; but in history you cannot trust a fellow who tries to be interesting. If he pretends to be "philosophical," you may know him to be an impostor. But, if he aims at being interesting or at anything like a fine picture, he is not far off saying the thing that is not.'

'Come, now,' cried Phil with spirit, for he felt that his turn had come, 'you may talk about the *Saturday* articles, which are ancient history in the bad sense of the term, but what do you say to the *Quarterly* articles, and the palpable blunders it exposes? What about Wace's "palisades" at Hastings? And why didn't Freeman cite the Abbé Baudri? And why did he misquote the Survey over and over again? And why are we not to use the fine old English term, "Battle of Hastings" — the only name given in the Tapestry, Guy of Amiens, and the rest — and are told we must always use, if we value *truth*, the term, "Battle of Senlac" — a mere mythical phrase — a piece of affectation of "dear old Orderic" in his Norman monastery? Why, years ago a man in the *Nineteenth Century* pointed out that to talk nowadays of the Battle of Senlac was as absurd as if a Frenchman were now to try to rechristen the Battle of Waterloo the Battle of Hougoumont! What do you say to the *Quar-*

terly on the Norman Conquest?' asked Phil impetuously, for he felt that he had got his knife into the Bede.

'I am sure we need not mind all these anonymous personalities,' said the Venerable one somewhat stiffly, for he felt that the last *Quarterly* article was rather a nasty hit; and as yet he had not the remotest idea how it ought to be answered. 'But here, bless me!' he cried, 'comes Middleman, of the House; what brings him to Oxford just now, I wonder.' And indeed, the tutor was not at all sorry that the conversation with his young friend should be suddenly broken off.

'Dear old man, what luck for me to meet you,' said the newcomer genially; 'I am going to examine in the Law School, and have run up for a couple of days to consult about the papers. I am staying with Bryce,' he explained. Jack Middleman, Q.C., was a young lawyer of much promise; he was already in Parliament and had expectations of office when Lord Salisbury returns to power. Though he had been twelve years in good practice, he kept up his reading and his love of Oxford. The Courts were not sitting, and he had run up to see some of the residents.

'Our new scholar, Raleigh,' said Wessex, introducing Phil to the Q.C.; 'he is attending the lectures of the Regius Professor of History, and I am trying to show him the difference between the late Professor and the present. You can tell him what Freeman was, for you used to be one of his ardent admirers and closest henchmen.'

'Yes, indeed,' said Middleman; 'he was a noble scholar, and I read and re-read every line he wrote. But there is a good deal to be said for the other method of work.'

'Just so,' said Phil, much relieved. 'I have been sticking up for Froude's pictures of Henry VIII., Elizabeth and Mary of Scots, the Reformation and the Armada. I won't believe that literary history is quite done yet.'

'Literary history!' laughed Wessex, who had recovered his good humour; 'why not say melodious science!—delicious philosophy!—graceful law! or any other paradoxical confusion of metaphors? "Literary history" is a contradiction in terms, is it not, Middleman?'

'Well,' said the lawyer, who was great at *Nisi prius*, 'let us know what we mean by literary history. History in which the narrative of events is made subservient to literary effect is an impudent swindle. But the history which has no quality of literature at all, neither power of expression nor imaginative insight, is nothing but materials, the bricks and stones out of which some one one day might build a house. If "literary history" means Lamartine's *History of the Girondists*, it is a sneaking form of the historical novel. But if literary history means Tacitus and Gibbon, it is the highest and the true form of history. What have you been lecturing upon this term, Wessex?'

'Well,' said the Venerable, 'for the last three terms we have been on the West-Saxon coinage, and the year before that I took up the system of *frith-borrow*.'

'I should like to hear your course on the legal and administrative reforms of the Norman Kings,' said the lawyer; 'it is a fine subject, from which we in the Temple might learn more than from *Meeson and Welsby*.'

'I have not reached the Norman Conquest yet,' said the Reverend Æthelbald simply, 'for we have been ten years over the Old-English times; but I hope to get down to Eadweard before I leave the college.'

'You have got so fearfully *gründlich* since my time,' said Jack, 'that I feel quite out of it at Oxford. History seems to be seen nowadays with some such apparatus as the naturalists describe the eye of a fly magnified to ten thousand diameters. Now, I used to think Gibbon to be the type of a great historian. He gives you in eight volumes the history of the civilised world, for a period not short of a thousand years, with a scholar's grasp of the recorded facts, a masterly insight into the leading movements, and a style that moves on like a Roman triumph in one unbroken but varied pageant. You have not given up Gibbon at Oxford, have you?' said the lawyer.

'Oh, no,' replied the tutor; but he added with the scintilla of a sneer, 'Gibbon made some mistakes, you know; and in the last hundred years a good deal has been discovered that he never heard of. I always warn our young people to read Gibbon with great caution, and never without their Muratori and their Pertz at hand. It isn't possible, is it,' asked the tutor in that sly way of his which so much frightened undergraduates, 'to put the true facts of a century into five hundred pages?'

'You don't want *all* the facts,' said Jack decisively, 'and you could not remember or use a tenth part of them if you could get them. And, what is more, you cannot get at the exact truth of every fact, however much you labour. Such minute accuracy in unimportant trifles is not only utterly unattainable, but it would be miserable pedantry to look for it.'

'Trifles!' cried out the Venerable in horror; 'you don't call any historical truths trifles, do you?'

'Yes! I call it an unimportant trifle,' said Jack, 'whether Ælfgifu stayed one day or two days at Cantwarabyrig, and it is waste of time to discuss the question in fifty pages. You see that you cannot get at the exact facts for all your pains. You know the row about Freeman's palisades at the Battle of Hastings. I pass no opinion, for I would not waste my time over such rubbish, and I don't care a *sceat* or a *scilling* whether there were palisades at Senlac or not. I daresay Freeman made slips like other people, possibly blunders — it would be a miracle if he did not. But all this fuss about his blunders, and much of the fuss he made about Froude's blunders, is poor fun. Freeman was a consummate historical scholar, and Froude is an elegant historical writer, and both have given us most interesting and valuable books, for which we ought to be truly grateful, however widely the two books differ in method.'

'Does not Freeman overdo his love of the Old English?' said Phil.

'Is not Froude a blind advocate of Henry VIII.?' asked the tutor.

'Both of them, no doubt, have very strong personal feelings and keen party interests,' said the Q.C., 'and both might have been free from much of what the world calls their bias or their prejudice, if they had been accustomed to deal with history in a far more general or organic spirit as the biography of mankind; and if both had not striven to unravel every incident in their limited periods, much as we seek to unravel the facts of a murder or a fraud. When we have a great trial in court, we have the living witnesses before us; we confront them with the accused; we examine them on oath, we cross-examine them, and re-examine them; and then my Lord sums up the evidence without any kind of feeling in the matter, and twelve jurymen have got to decide. Well, after all that, we know the jury do sometimes toss up for the verdict; they are very often wrong, but we seldom hang the innocent man or let off a confirmed rogue. With all our pains, and the cross-examination of living witnesses, we are often beaten, and admit that we cannot get to the bottom of it. No lawyer would hope to find out the true story of anything if a witness could never be brought into court, and if no evidence could ever be sifted by cross-examination. But cross-examination is always impossible to the historian. You historians have only to rely on the most plausible story you can find in a bundle of old papers, the origin of which is usually doubtful. How can you extract anything that we should call legal evidence in court, and how can you get "at truth" by a method of investigation which any lawyer would tell you was ridiculous?'

'Do you mean to tell us that the facts of history are not to be discovered by competent research?' asked the tutor in dismay.

'Certainly, the general facts of history are ascertainable in all their leading characters, if we are content to strike an average, or to look at sufficiently wide epochs and at the dominant tendencies and creative spirits. Research and insight together will enable you to grasp the main features of an age and the essential qualities of a great man. But no research and no insight, and no labour and no subdivision of labour will ever enable you to reach the literal and particular truth about every minor incident, or to penetrate to the inner motives and secret disposition of every man and woman who crosses the stage of history. We cannot do this for contemporary persons and events around us, with all the methods of inquiry which contemporary facts and characters admit. Much less can we do it for distant ages, with nothing but the remnants of meagre and suspicious records. People are still disputing in the newspapers about the famous ball before the Battle of Waterloo, and why Bazaine surrendered Metz, and how the Archbishop was killed or the Tuileries burnt down in the commune of Paris. If the exact truth of what happened a generation or two ago is often obscure whilst hundreds of eye-witnesses are still living, how can you be certain whether Harold built a palisade at Battle or not?'

'If he didn't,' cried Wessex, in a visible pet, 'I will give up Freeman and the Old English for ever!'

'I have far too great admiration for Freeman,' said the young M.P., 'to stake his reputation on a matter of stakes. No! Freeman was an indefatigable inquirer into early records, but he muddled away his sense of proportion. He was not a philosopher like Thucydides and Tacitus, nor a great writer like Robertson and Gibbon; and he made the mistake of all specialists, that labour and minuteness can do the work of imagination and insight. The microscopic eye, with its power of ten thousand diameters, will, after all, only show an infinite series of minute specks. It will not put them together, nor will it make an intelligible portrait of a whole. Froude is a fine writer, who has painted a set of brilliant scenes; but to understand the great religious and intellectual forces of the sixteenth century in Europe requires a far larger range than is disclosed at Simancas, and a deeper philosophy than Carlyle's, which may be summed up as detestation of Popery and the people. A great history cannot be made either by microscopic analysis or by pictorial bravura. The palæo-photo-graphic method only gives you a shapeless pile of separate bricks. The chiaroscuro-impressionist method will give you some glowing pictures; but then wicked people start up and say they are not true, and not fair.'

'What method, then, has to be followed by any great history?' cried out in the same breath the tutor and the freshman.

'Well, what I would advise a young man going into the historical line to bespeak is — first, indefatigable research into all the accessible materials; secondly, a sound philosophy of human evolution; thirdly, a genius for seizing on the typical movements and the great men; and lastly, the power of a true artist in grouping subjects and in describing typical men and events. All four are necessary; and you seem to think at Oxford that the first is enough without the rest. But, unless you have a real philosophy of history, you have nothing but your own likings and dislikings to direct your judgment of men and movements. Unless you have the insight to select and classify your facts, you and your readers will be lost in a sea of details. Not one fact in a hundred is worth preservation, just as biology could only exist as a science by judicious selection of typical forms. To do anything else is to assume that induction could take place in logic, as Aldrich says, *per enumerationem simplicem*. And lastly, unless you can impress on your readers' minds a vivid idea of some given world or some representative man, you will only send them to sleep. If the historical romance can do nothing but mislead, the historical ditch-water will only disgust.'

'And who ever united all these four qualifications?' said the tutor.

'Why, Gibbon did, or very nearly, and that is his supreme merit. He was as learned as Mommsen, and as accurate as Freeman; he had something of the philosophy of Hume, and almost as much critical judgment as Robertson; and he was nearly as great an artist as Herodotus or Livy. Mommsen's *Rome* might be put beside Gibbon's for its learning, insight, judgment, and concentration had he only a spark of Gibbon's fire and art. But as a German, how could we expect it from him? Henri Martin's *France* might be named with Gibbon's *Rome* if the worthy Frenchman had been equal to six volumes instead of sixteen. Grote's *Greece* is a fine book, but, like Freeman, he is overwhelmed in the volume of his own *minutiæ* and his extravagant passion for his Chosen People.'

'And is that the whole of the list you could make of the really good histories?' asked the tutor.

'Not at all,' replied the lawyer; 'there are plenty of good books — but I should hardly call any of them great by the side of Gibbon. There is Milman's *Latin Christianity*, and Curtius and Dunker, Thirlwall's *Greece*, Merivale's *Rome*, Michelet's *France*, Finlay's *Greece*, Carlyle's *Cromwell*, and Ranke's *Popes*, Duruy's *Rome*, Green's *Short History*, and a dozen more, not to weary you with a catalogue. But they all, no doubt, have their limitations. Some are not adequately critical; some fall short in real study; some are more or less perverse; and some are indifferent artists.'

'Not one of them can be put beside the *Norman Conquest* for profound research,' cried Wessex.

'Nor beside Froude for beauty of style,' cried Phil.

'Well, I admire both, as I tell you,' said Jack, 'but I doubt if the method of either is destined to give us much more in the future. The vast accumulation of historical material is an excellent and essential thing. But to deluge the world with mere extracts and translations of these undigested documents, as the host of Freemanikins threaten to do, is a dismal outlook. If the history of the world is to be written on that scale, the British Museum will not contain the books that shall be written. And no human intellect could master or use them when they were written. On the other hand, the pictorial method is constantly seducing its votaries into inaccurate, garbled, and over-coloured pictures. We want more concentration, greater breadth, a higher philosophy.'

'You speak as if history were played out,' said the Bede.

'It has to be put upon a new footing, I firmly believe,' said the politician. 'History is only one department of Sociology, just as Natural History is the descriptive part of Biology. And History will have to be brought most strictly under the guidance and inspiration of Social Philosophy. The day of the chronicler is past; the day of the littérateur is past. The field of knowledge is too vast for the whole of the facts to be set forth, or a tenth of them. To confine ourselves to "periods" is to destroy our sense of unity and proportion, and to weaken our brain by ceasing to regard history as the handmaid and instrument of Social Philosophy. Excerpts from ten thousand chronicles are useful as dictionaries and collections, but they are a mere nuisance as continuous histories. It may be that Gibbon's masterpiece is destined to be the last example of that rarest of combinations — profound scholarship with splendid art. Since his age there has grown up a sense of the unity of human evolution and a solid philosophy of society. The histories of the future will, no doubt, fill up and complete, illustrate, and correct, that general plan of the biography of humanity. They will follow, more likely, the method of Mommsen in his *Roman Provinces*, or Bishop Stubbs's *Constitutional History* — the fine old way of Heeren, Hallam, Guizot; they group movements and forces, rather than narrate events. They will no longer chronicle small beer or paint melodramatic scenes. They will illustrate philosophy.'

'Well, good-bye, Wessex,' said Jack; 'I hope that next time we meet, you will have got on to the Norman Kings — they were worth a score of Ecgberhts — and I hope my young friend here will one day write another prize essay fit to compare with the *Holy Roman Empire*. I must be off: the Magdalen bells have begun.'

CHAPTER V.

A SURVEY OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.[1]

He who would understand the Middle Ages must make a special study of the thirteenth century — one of the landmarks between the ancient and the modern world, one of the most pregnant, most organic, most memorable, in the annals of mankind. It is an epoch (perhaps the last of the centuries of which this can be said) crowded with names illustrious in action, in thought, in art, in religion equally; which is big with those problems, intellectual, social, political, and spiritual that six succeeding centuries have in vain toiled to solve.

A 'Century' is, of course, a purely arbitrary limit of time. But for practical purposes we can only reckon by years and groups of years. And, as in the biography of a man, we speak of the happy years of a life, or a decade of great activity, so it is convenient to speak of a brilliant 'century,' if we attach no mysterious value to our artificial measure of time. It happens, however, that the thirteenth century not only has a really distinctive character of its own, but that, near to its beginning and to its close, very typical events occurred. In 1198 took place the election of Innocent III., the most successful, perhaps the most truly representative name, of all the mediæval popes. In the year preceding (1197) we may see the Empire visibly beginning to change its spirit with the death of Henry VI., the ferocious son of Barbarossa. In the year following

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 50, N.S. September 1891.

(1199) died Richard Lion-heart, the last of the Anglo-French sovereigns, and, we may say, the last of the genuine Crusader kings, to be succeeded by his brother John, who was happily forced to become an English king, and to found the Constitution of England by signing the Great Charter.

And at the end of the century, its last year (1300) is the date of the ominous 'Jubilee' of the Papacy — the year in which Dante places his great poem — a year which is one of the most convenient points in the *memoria technica* of modern history. Three years later died Boniface VIII., after the tremendous humiliation which marked the manifest decadence of the Papacy; eight years later began the 'Babylonish Captivity,' the seventy years' exile of the Papacy at Avignon; then came the ruin of the Templars throughout Europe, and all the tragedies and convulsions which mark the reigns of Philip the Fair in France, Edward II. in England, and the confusion that overtook the Empire on the death of Henry of Luxembourg, that last hope of imperial ambition. Thus, taking the period between the election of Innocent III., in 1198, and the removal of the Papacy to Avignon, in 1308, we find a very definite character in the thirteenth century. It would, of course, be necessary to fix the view on Europe as a whole, or rather on Latin Christendom, to obtain any unity of conception; and, obviously, the development and decay of the Church must be the central point, for this is at once the most general and the important element in the common life of Christendom.

Within the limits of the thirteenth century, so understood, a series of striking events and great names is crowded — the growth, culmination, extravagance, and then the humiliation of the Papal See; the eighteen years' rule of Innocent III., the fourteen years of Gregory IX., the twenty-one of Innocent IV.; the short revival of Gregory X.; the ambition, the pride, the degradation, and shame of Boniface VIII. The great experiment to organise Christendom under a single spiritual sovereign had been made by some of the most aspiring natures, and the most consummate politicians who ever wore mitre — had been made and failed. When the Popes returned from Avignon to Rome in 1378, after the seventy years of exile from their capital, it was to find the Catholic world rent with schism, a series of anti-popes, heresy, and the seeds of the Reformation in England and in Germany. Thus the secession to Avignon in the opening of the fourteenth century was the beginning of the end of spiritual unity for Latin Christendom.

At the very opening of the thirteenth century, the diversion of the Crusade to the capture of Constantinople in 1204, and all the incidents of that unholy war, prove that, as a moral and spiritual movement, the era of Godfrey and Tancred, of Peter the Hermit and Bernard of Clairvaux was ended; and though, for a century or two, kings took the Cross, like St. Louis and our Edward I., in the thirteenth century, or, like our Henry V., in the fifteenth century, talked of so doing, the hope of annihilating Islam was gone for ever, and Christendom, for four centuries, had enough to do to protect Europe itself from the Moslem. And within a few years of this cynical prostitution of the Crusading enthusiasm in the conquest of Byzantium, the Crusading passion broke out in the dreadful persecution of the Albigenses and the Crusade against heresy of Simon de Montfort. And hardly was the unity of Christendom assured by blood and terror, when the spiritual Crusades of Francis and Dominic begin, and the contagious zeal of the Mendicant Friars restored the force of the Church, and gave it a new era of moral and social vitality.

Now, whilst the Popes were making their last grand rally to weld Christendom into spiritual unity, in France, in England, in Spain, in North Italy, in South Italy, in Southern Germany, in a minor degree throughout central Europe, princes of great energy were organising the germs of nations, and were founding the institutions of complex civil administration. Monarchy, municipalities, nations, and organised government, national constitutions, codes of law, a central police, and international trade were growing uniformly throughout the entire century. Feudalism, strictly so called, the baron's autocracy, baronial war, and the manor court, were as rapidly dying down. Crushed between the hammer of the kings and the anvil of the burghers, the feudal chivalry suffered, in many a bloody field, a series of shameful overthrows all through the fourteenth century, until it ended in the murderous orgies of the fifteenth century. But it was the thirteenth century that established throughout Europe the two great forces of the future which were to divide the inheritance of feudalism — a civilised and centralised monarchy on the one hand, a rich, industrious, resolute people on the other hand.

It was the thirteenth century, moreover, that saw the great development of the manufacturing and trading cities north of the Alps. Down to the expulsion of the Christians from Palestine, at the close of the twelfth century, there had been few cities in Europe of wealth and importance outside Italy and the South of France and of Spain. But the next hundred years founded the greatness of cities like Paris and London, of Troyes, Rouen, Lyons, Bordeaux, Bruges, Ghent, Cologne, Strasburg, Basle, Nuremberg, Bremen, Lubeck, Hamburg, Dantzic, Winchester, Norwich, Exeter, Bristol. The Crusades had brought Europe together, and had brought the West face to face with the East. Mankind had ceased to be *ascriptus glebæ*, locally bound to a few clearings on the earth. It had begun to understand the breadth and variety of the planet, and the infinite resources of its products. Industrial exchange on a world-wide scale began again after a long interval of ten centuries.

The latter half of this same century also saw the birth of that characteristic feature of modern society — the control of political power by representative assemblies. For the first time in Europe deputies from the towns take part in the national councils. In Spain this may be traced even before the century begins. Early in the century it is found in Sicily; about the middle of the century we trace it in England and Germany; and finally, in France. As every one knows, it was in 1264 that Simon de Montfort summoned to Parliament knights of each shire, and two representatives from boroughs and cities; and, in 1295, Edward I. called together the first fully-constituted Parliament as now understood in England. The States-General of France, the last and the least memorable of all national Parliaments, were only seven years subsequent to the formal inauguration of the Parliament of England. The introduction of Parliamentary representation would alone suffice to make memorable the thirteenth century.

The same age, too, which was so fertile in new political ideas and in grand spiritual effort, was no less rich in philosophy, in the germs of science, in reviving the inheritance of ancient learning, in the scientific study of law, in the foundation of the great Northern universities, in the magnificent expansion of the architecture we call Gothic, in the beginnings of painting and of sculpture, in the foundation of modern literature, both in prose and verse, in the fullest development of the Troubadours, the Romance poets, the lays, sonnets, satires, and tales of Italy, Provence, and Flanders; and finally, in that stupendous poem, which we universally accept as the greatest of modern epical works, wherein the most splendid genius of the Middle Ages seemed to chant its last majestic requiem, which he himself, as I have said, emphatically dated in the year 1300. Truly, if we must use arbitrary numbers to help our memory, that year — 1300 — may be taken as the resplendent sunset of an epoch which had extended in one form back for nearly one thousand years to the fall of the Roman empire, and equally as the broken and stormy dawn of an epoch which has for six hundred years since been passing through an amazing phantasmagoria of change.

Now this great century, the last of the true Middle Ages, which, as it drew to its own end, gave birth to Modern Society, has a special character of its own, a character that gives to it an abiding and enchanting interest. We find in it a harmony of power, a universality of endowment, a glow, an aspiring ambition and confidence, such as we never again find in later centuries, at least so generally and so permanently diffused. At the opening of the thirteenth century, Christendom, as a whole, rested united in profound belief in one religious faith. There had appeared in the age preceding teachers of new doctrines, like Abailard, Gilbert de la Porée, Arnold of Brescia, and others; but their new ideas had not at all penetrated to the body of the people. As a whole, Christendom had still, as the century began, an unquestioned and unquestionable creed, without schism, heresy, doubts, or sects. And this creed still sufficed to inspire the most profound thought, the most lofty poetry, the widest culture, the freest art of the age: it filled statesmen with awe, scholars with enthusiasm, and consolidated society around uniform objects of reverence and worship. It bound men together, from the Hebrides to the Eastern Mediterranean, from the

Atlantic to the Baltic, as European men have never since been bound. Great thinkers, like Albert of Cologne and Aquinas, found it to be the stimulus of their meditations. Mighty poets, like Dante, could not conceive poetry, unless based on it and saturated with it. Creative artists, like Giotto, found it an ever-living well-spring of pure beauty. The great cathedrals embodied it in a thousand forms of glory and power. To statesman, artist, poet, thinker, teacher, soldier, worker, chief, or follower, it supplied at once inspiration and instrument.

This unity of creed had existed, it is true, for five or six centuries in large parts of Europe, and, indeed, in a shape even more uniform and intense. But not till the thirteenth century did it co-exist with such acute intellectual energy, with such philosophic power, with such a free and superb art, with such sublime poetry, with so much industry, culture, wealth, and so rich a development of civic organisation. This thirteenth century was the last in the history of mankind in Europe when a high and complex civilisation has been saturated with a uniform and unquestioned creed. As we all know, since then, civilisation has had to advance with ever-increasing multiplicity of creeds. What impresses us as the keynote of that century is the *harmony* of power it displays. As in the Augustan age, or the Periclean age, or the Homeric age, indeed, far more than in any of them, men might fairly dream, in the age of Innocent and St. Louis, that they had reached a normal state, when human life might hope to see an ultimate symmetry of existence. There have been since epochs of singular intellectual expansion, of creative art, of material progress, of moral earnestness, of practical energy. Our nineteenth century has very much of all of these in varying proportions. But we have long ceased to expect that they will not clash with each other; we have abandoned hope of ever seeing them work in organic harmony together.

Now the thirteenth century was an era of no one special character. It was in nothing one-sided, and in nothing discordant. It had great thinkers, great rulers, great teachers, great poets, great artists, great moralists, and great workers. It could not be called the material age, the devotional age, the political age, or the poetic age, in any special degree. It was equally poetic, political, industrial, artistic, practical, intellectual, and devotional. And these qualities acted in harmony on a uniform conception of life, with a real symmetry of purpose. There was one common creed, one ritual, one worship, one sacred language, one Church, a single code of manners, a uniform scheme of society, a common system of education, an accepted type of beauty, a universal art, something like a recognised standard of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. One half of the world was not occupied in ridiculing or combating what the other half was doing. Nor were men absorbed in ideals of their own, whilst treating the ideals of their neighbours as matters of indifference and waste of power. Men as utterly different from each other as were Stephen Langton, St. Francis, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, Dante, Giotto, St. Louis, Edward I. — all profoundly accepted one common order of ideas, equally applying to things of the intellect, of moral duty, of action, and of the soul — to public and private life at once — and they could all feel that they were together working out the same task. It may be doubted if that has ever happened in Europe since.

To point out the peculiar character of an age is not to praise it without reserve: much less to ask men to return to it now. No one can now be suspected of sighing for the time of Innocent III., of St. Francis and St. Louis;

nor do reasonable historians deny that their simple beliefs and ideas are frankly incompatible with all that to-day we call freedom, science, and progress. Let us be neither reactionary, nor obscurantist, neither Catholic nor absolutist in sympathy, but seek only to understand an age in its own spirit, and from the field of its own ideas. Nor need we forget how the uniform creed of Christendom was shaken, even in the thirteenth century, by fierce spasms which ended too often in blood and horror. Their social system certainly was not without struggles; for the thirteenth century was no golden era, nor did the lion lie down with the lamb or consent to be led by a little child. We cannot forget either Albigensian War or Runnymede, nor our Barons' War, nor Guelphs and Ghibellines, nor the history of Frederick II., Manfred, and Conradino, nor the fall of Boniface, nor the Sicilian Vespers. And yet we may confidently maintain that there was a real coherence of belief, sentiment, manners, and life in the thirteenth century.

Perhaps we ought rather to say, in its earlier generations and for the great mass of its people and doings. For we may see the seed of divergencies, heresies, insurrections, civil war, anarchy, discord, doubt, and rebellion in Church, State, society, and habits, gathering up in the thirteenth century, and especially definite in its stormy and ominous close. In Roger Bacon, even in Aquinas, nay, in Dante, there lie all the germs of the intellectual dilemmas which shook Catholicism to its foundations. Francis and Dominic, if they gave the Church a magnificent rally, saved her by remedies which a cool judgment must pronounce to be suicidal. Our Edward I., in the thirteenth century, had to deal with the same rebellious forces which made the reign of our Henry VI., in the fifteenth century, a record of blood and anarchy. Boniface, Philip the Fair, even Edward I., did violent things in the thirteenth century, which Churchmen and princes after them hardly exceeded. And there are profanities and ribaldries in the thirteenth-century poetry which Rabelais, Voltaire, and Diderot have not surpassed. But in judging an epoch one has to weigh how far those things were common and characteristic of it, how far they deeply and widely affected it. Judged by these tests, we must say that scepticism, anarchy, ribaldry, and hypocrisy, however latent in the thirteenth century, had not yet eaten out its soul.

It may surprise some readers to treat the thirteenth century as the virtual close of the Middle Ages, an epoch which is usually placed in the latter half of the fifteenth century, in the age of Louis XI., Henry VII., and Ferdinand of Arragon. But the true spirit of Feudalism, the living soul of Catholicism, which together make up the compound type of society we call mediæval, were, in point of fact, waning all through the thirteenth century. The hurly-burly of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries was merely one long and cruel death agony. Nay, the inner soul of Catholic Feudalism quite ended in the first generation of the thirteenth century — with St. Dominic, St. Francis, Innocent III., Philip Augustus, and Otto IV., Stephen Langton, and William, Earl Mareschal. The truly characteristic period of mediævalism is in the twelfth, rather than the thirteenth, century, the period covered by the first three Crusades from 1094, the date of the Council of Clermont, to 1192, when Cœur-de-Lion withdrew from the Holy Land. Or, if we put it a little wider in limits, we may date true mediævalism from the rise of Hildebrand, about 1070, to the death of Innocent III. in 1216, or just about a century and a half. St. Louis himself, as we read Joinville's *Memoirs*, seems to us a man belated, born too late, and almost an anachronism in the second half of the thirteenth century.

We know that in the slow evolution of society the social brilliancy of a movement is seldom visible, and is almost never ripe for poetic and artistic idealisation until the energy of the movement itself is waning, or even it may be, is demonstrably spent. Shakespeare prolonged the Renascence of the fifteenth century, the Renascence of Leonardo and Raphael, into the seventeenth century, when Puritanism was in full career; and Shakespeare — it is deeply significant — died on the day when Oliver Cromwell entered college at Cambridge. And so, when Dante, in his Vision of 1300, saw the heights and the depths of Catholic Feudalism, he was looking back over great movements which were mighty forces a hundred years earlier. Just so, though the thirteenth century contained within its bosom the plainest proofs that the mediæval world was ending, the flower, the brilliancy, the variety, the poetry, the soul of the mediæval world, were never seen in so rich a glow as in the thirteenth century, its last great effort.

In a brief review of each of the dominant movements which give so profound a character to the thirteenth century as a whole, one begins naturally with the central movement of all — the Church. The thirteenth century was the era of the culmination, the over-straining, and then the shameful defeat of the claim made by the Church of Rome to a moral and spiritual autocracy in Christendom. There are at least five Popes in that one hundred years — Innocent III., Gregory IX., Innocent IV., Gregory X., and Boniface VIII. — whose characters impress us with a sense of power or of astounding desire of power, whose lives are romances and dreams, and whose careers are amongst the most instructive in history. He who would understand the Middle Ages must study from beginning to end the long and crowded Pontificate of Innocent III. In genius, in commanding nature, in intensity of character, in universal energy, in aspiring designs, Innocent III. has few rivals in the fourteenth centuries of the Roman Pontiffs, and few superiors in any age on any throne in the world. His eighteen years of rule, from 1198 to 1216, were one long effort, for the moment successful, and in part deserving success, to enforce on the kings and peoples of Europe a higher morality, respect for the spiritual mission of the Church, and a sense of their common civilisation. We feel that he is truly a great man with a noble cause, when the Pope forces Philip Augustus to take back the wife he had so insolently cast off, when the Pope forces John to respect the rights of all his subjects, laymen or churchmen, when the Pope gives to England the best of her Primates, Stephen Langton, the principal author of our Great Charter, when the Pope accepts the potent enthusiasm of the New Friars and sends them forth on their mission of revivalism.

It is not necessary to enter on one of the most difficult problems in history to decide how far the development and organisation of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages were worth the price that civilisation paid in moral, intellectual, and in material loss. Still less can we attempt to justify such Crusades as that which established the Latin kingdom in Constantinople, or the Crusade to crush the revolt of the Albigensian heretics, and all the enormous assumptions of Innocent in things temporal and things spiritual. But before we decide that in the thirteenth century civilisation would have been the gainer, if there had been no central Church at all, let us count up all the great brains of the time, with Aquinas and Dante at their head, all the great statesmen, St. Louis, Blanche of Castile, in

France; Simon de Montfort and Edward I., in England, and Ferdinand III., in Spain; Frederick II. and Rudolph of Hapsburg, in the Empire, — who might in affairs of state often oppose Churchmen, but who felt that society itself reposed on a well-ordered Church.

If the great attempt failed in the hands of Innocent III., surely one of the finest brains and noblest natures that Rome ever sent forth — and fail it did on the whole, except as a temporary expedient — it could not succeed with smaller men, when every generation made the conditions of success more hopeless. The superhuman pride of Gregory IX., the venerable pontiff who for fourteen years defied the whole strength of the Emperor Frederick II., seems to us to-day, in spite of his lofty spirit, but to parody that of Hildebrand, of Alexander III., and Innocent III. And when we come to Innocent IV. (1243–1264), the disturber of the peace of the Empire, he is almost a forecast of Boniface VIII. And Boniface himself (1294–1303), though his words were more haughty than those of the mightiest of his predecessors, though insatiable ambition and audacious intrigue gave him some moments of triumph, ended after nine years of desperate struggle in what the poet calls 'the mockery, the vinegar, the gall of a new crucifixion of the Vicar of Christ.' Read Dante, and see all that a great spirit in the Middle Ages could still hope from the Church and its chiefs — all that made such dreams a mockery and a delusion.

When Dante wrote, the Popes were already settled at Avignon and the Church had entered upon one of its worst eras. And as we follow his scathing indignation, in the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*, or in the twenty-seventh of the *Paradiso*, we feel how utterly the vision of Peter had failed to be realised on earth. But for one hundred years before, all through the thirteenth century, the writing on the wall may now be read, in letters of fire. When Saladin forced the allied kings of Europe to abandon the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre, and Lion-hearted Richard turned back in despair (1192), the Crusades, as military movements, ended. The later Crusades of the thirteenth century were splendid acts of folly, of anachronism, even crime. They were 'magnificent, but not war' — in any rational sense. It was Europe that had to be protected against the Moslem — not Asia or Africa that was to be conquered. All through the thirteenth century European civilisation was enjoying the vast material and intellectual results of the Crusades of the twelfth century. But to sail for Jerusalem, Egypt, or Tunis, had then become, as the wise Joinville told St. Louis, a cruel neglect of duty at home.

It was not merely in the exhaustion of the Crusading zeal that the waning of the Catholic fervour was shown. In the twelfth century there had been learned or ingenious heretics. But the mark of the thirteenth century is the rise of heretic sects, schismatic churches, religious reformations, spreading deep down amongst the roots of the people. We have the three distinct religious movements which began to sap the orthodox citadel, and which afterwards took such vast proportions — Puritanism, Mysticism, Scepticism. All of them take form in the thirteenth century — Waldenses, Albigenses, Petrobussians, Poor Men, Anti-Ritualists, Anti-Sacerdotalists, Manichæans, Gospel Christians, Quietists, Flagellants, Pastoureaux, fanatics of all orders. All through the thirteenth century we have an intense ferment of the religious exaltation, culminating in the orthodox mysticism, the rivalries, the missions, the revivalism, of the new allies of the Church, the Franciscans and Dominicans, the Friars or Mendicant Orders.

The thirteenth century saw the romantic rise, the marvellous growth, and then the inevitable decay of the Friars, the two orders whose careers form one of the most fascinating and impressive stories in modern history. The Franciscans, or Grey Friars, founded in 1212, the Dominicans, or Black Friars, founded in 1216, by the middle of the century had infused new life throughout the Catholic world. By the end of the century their power was spent, and they had begun to be absorbed in the general life of the Church. It was one of the great rallies of the Papal Church, perhaps of all the rallies the most important, certainly the most brilliant, most pathetic, most fascinating, the most rich in poetry, in art, in devotion. For the mediæval Church of Rome, like the Empire of the Cæsars at Rome, like the Eastern Empire of Constantinople, like the Empire of the Khalifs, which succeeded that, seems to subsist for centuries after its epoch of zenith by a long series of rallies, revivals, and new births out of almost hopeless disorganisation and decay.

But the thirteenth century is not less memorable for its political than for its spiritual history. And in this field the history is that of new organisations, not the dissolution of the old. The thirteenth century gave Europe the nations as we now know them. France, England, Spain, large parts of North and South Germany, became nations, where they were previously counties, duchies, and fiefs. Compare the map of Europe at the end of the twelfth century, when Philip Augustus was struggling with Richard I., when the King of England was a more powerful ruler in France than the so-called King of France in Paris, when Spain was held by various groups of petty kinglets facing the solid power of the Moors, compare this with the map of Europe at the end of the thirteenth century, with Spain constituted a kingdom under Ferdinand III. and Alfonso X., France under Philip the Fair, and England under Edward I.

At the very opening of the thirteenth century John did England the inestimable service of losing her French possessions. At the close of the century the greatest of the Plantagenets finally annexed Wales to England and began the incorporation of Scotland and Ireland. Of the creators of England as a sovereign power in the world, from Alfred to Chatham, between the names of the Conqueror and Cromwell, assuredly that of Edward I. is the most important. As to France, the petty counties which Philip Augustus inherited in 1180 had become, in the days of Philip the Fair (1286–1314), the most powerful nation in Europe. As a great European force, the French nation dates from the age of Philip Augustus, Blanche of Castile, her son Louis IX. (the Saint), and the two Philips (III. and IV.), the son and grandson of St. Louis. The monarchy of France was indeed created in the thirteenth century. All that went before was preparation: all that came afterwards was development. Almost as much may be said for England and for Spain.

It was an age of great rulers. Indeed, we may doubt if any hundred years of European history has been so crowded with great statesmen and kings. In England, Stephen Langton and the authors of our Great Charter in 1215; William, Earl Mareschal, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and above all Edward I., great as soldier, as ruler, as legislator — as great when he yielded as when he compelled. In France, Philip Augustus, a king curiously like our Edward I. in his virtues as in his faults, though earlier by three generations; Blanche, his son's wife, Regent of France; St. Louis, her son; and St. Louis' grandson, the terrible, fierce, subtle, and adroit Philip the Fair. Then on the throne of the Empire, from 1220 to 1250, Frederick II., 'the world's wonder,' one of the most brilliant characters of the Middle Ages, whose life is a long romance, whose many-sided endowments seemed to promise everything but real greatness and abiding results. Next, after a generation, his successor, less brilliant but far more truly great, Rudolph of Hapsburg, emperor from 1273 to 1291, the founder of the Austrian dynasty, the ancestor of its sovereigns, the parallel, I had almost said the equal, of our own Edward I. In Spain, Ferdinand III. and his son, Alfonso X., whose reigns united gave Spain peace and prosperity for fifty-four years (1230–1284).

How comes it that in this epoch lands so different as Italy, Spain, France, England, and Germany, produce rulers who, in all essentials as statesmen, are so closely parallel in act, whilst widely different in character? Frederick II., in nature, seems the antithesis of St. Louis, so does Philip Augustus of Ferdinand III., our cultured Edward I. of his martial contemporary, Rudolph of Hapsburg. Yet these men, differing so entirely in nature and in gifts, ruling men so different as those of Sicily and Austria, Castile and England, all exercise the same functions in the same way: all are great generals, administrators, legislators, statesmen, founders of nations, authors of constitutions, supporters of the Church, promoters of learning. Clearly it is that their time is the golden age of kings, an age when the social conditions forced forth all the manhood and the genius of the born ruler; when the ruled were by habit, religion, and by necessity eager to welcome the great king and cheerfully helped him in his task. Of them all, St. Louis is certainly the most beautiful nature, Frederick II. the most interesting personality, our Simon de Montfort the most genuine patriot, our own Edward I. the most creative mind, and he and Philip Augustus the kings whose work was the most pregnant with permanent results; but we may find in a much ruder nature, in Rudolph of Hapsburg, the simple, un-wearied warrior chief, who finally turned the German kings from Italy to the North, who never quarrelled with the Church, who so sternly asserted the arm of law, and whose whole life was an unbroken series of well-won triumphs — the most truly typical king of the thirteenth century. Frederick II. and Edward I. are really in advance of their age; and St. Louis and Ferdinand III. are saints and churchmen more than kings.

Together with the kings must be kept always in view the base on which the power of the kings was founded — the growing greatness of the towns. There were two allied forces which divided the inheritance of Feudalism — the monarchs on the one hand, the burghers on the other. The thirteenth century is eminently the era of the foundation of the great towns north of the Alps. In France, in Spain, in England, in Burgundy, in Flanders, and even we may say in Germany, the princes never became strong but by alliance with the wealth, the intelligence, the energy, of the cities. To the burghers the kings represented civilisation, internal peace, good government: to the kings the towns represented the sinews of war, the material and intellectual sources of their splendour, of their armies, their civil organisation. Hence, in the thirteenth century, there grew in greatness, side by side and in friendly alliance, the two powers which, in later centuries, have fought out such obstinate battles — the monarchies and the people. And out of this alliance, at once its condition and its instrument, there grew up Cortes, Diets, States-General, Parliaments, Charters, constitutional laws, codes, and ordinances.

It is true that in Italy, Spain, Provence, and Languedoc, we find rich trading towns as early as the First Crusade, but it was not until the thirteenth century that we can call any northern city an independent power, with a large, wealthy, and proud population, a municipal life of its own, and a widely extended commerce. By the end of the thirteenth century Europe is covered with such towns — Paris, London, Strasburg, Cologne, Ghent, Rouen, Bordeaux, in the first line, the great wool cities of East England, the ports of the South and West, the great river cities of France along the Loire, the Rhone, the Garonne, the Seine, the rich, artistic, laborious, and crowded cities of Flanders, the rich and powerful cities on the Rhine from Basle down to Arnheim, the cities of the Danube, the Elbe, and the Baltic. This is the age of the great confederation of the Rhine, and the rise of the Hanseatic League; for in Germany and in Flanders, where the towns could not count on the protection of a friendly and central monarchy, the towns formed mutual leagues for protection and support amongst themselves. It would need a volume to work out this complex development. But we may take it that, for Northern Europe, the thirteenth century is the era of the definite establishment of rich, free, self-governing municipalities. It is the flourishing era of town charters, of city leagues, and of the systematic establishment of a European commerce, north of the Mediterranean, both inter-provincial and inter-national. And out of these rich and teeming cities arose that social power destined to such a striking career in the next six centuries — the middle class, a new order in the State, whose importance rests on wealth, intelligence, and organisation, not on birth or on arms. And out of that middle class rose popular representation, election by the commons, *i.e.*, by communes, or corporate constituencies, the third estate. The history of popular representation in Europe would occupy a volume, or many volumes: its conception, birth, and youth fall within the thirteenth century.

The Great Charter, which the barons, as real representatives of the whole nation, wrested from John in 1215, did not, it is true, contain any scheme of popular representation; but it asserted the principle, and it laid down canons of public law which led directly to popular representation and a parliamentary constitution. The Great Charter has been talked about for many centuries in vague superlatives of praise, by those who had little precise or accurate knowledge of it. But now that our knowledge of it is full and exact, we see that its importance was in no way exaggerated, and perhaps was hardly understood; and we find it hard adequately to express our admiration of its wise, just, and momentous policy. The Great Charter of 1215 led in a direct line to the complete and developed Parliament of 1295. And Bishop Stubbs has well named the interval between the two, the eighty years of struggle for a political constitution. The Charter of John contains the principle of taxation through the common council of the realm. From the very first year after it representative councils appear; first from counties; then, in 1254, we have a regular Parliament from shires; in 1264, after the battle of Lewes, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, summoned two discreet representatives from towns and cities by writ; in 1273, Edward I. summoned what was in effect a Parliament; and, after several Parliaments summoned in intervening years, we have the first complete and finally constituted Parliament in 1295.

But our own, the greatest and most permanent of Parliaments, was by no means the earliest. Representatives of cities and boroughs had come to the Cortes of Castile and of Arragon in the twelfth century; early in the thirteenth century Frederick II. summoned them to general courts in Sicily; in the middle of the century the towns sent deputies to the German Diets; in 1277, the commons and towns swear fealty to Rudolph of Hapsburg; in 1291, was founded in the mountains of Schwytz that Swiss confederation which has just celebrated its 600th anniversary; and, in 1302, Philip the Fair summoned the States-General to back him in his desperate duel with Boniface VIII. Thus, seven years after Edward I. had called to Westminster that first true Parliament which has had there so great a history over 600 years, Philip called together to Notre Dame at Paris the three estates — the clergy, the baronage, and the commons. So clear is it that the thirteenth century called into being that momentous element of modern civilisation, the representation of the people in Parliament.

Side by side with Parliaments there grew up the power of the law courts: along with constitutions, civil jurisprudence. Our Edward I. is often called, and called truly, the English Justinian. The authority of the decisions of the courts, the development of law by direct legislation — *i.e.*, case-law as we know it, legislative amendment of the law as we know it — first begin with the reign of Edward I. From that date to this hour we have an unbroken sequence of development in our judicial, as much as in our parliamentary, history. An even more momentous transformation of law took place throughout France. There the kings created the powerful order of the jurists, and ruled at home and abroad through them. In the legislation of Philip Augustus, the translation under him of the *Corpus Juris* into French, the famous *Etablissements* of St. Louis, at the middle of the century, the growing importance of the *Parlements*, or judicial councils, under Philip the Fair at the end of the century, we have the first resurrection of the Roman civil law to fight out its long contest with the feudal law, which has led to its ultimate supremacy in the *Civil Code* of our day.

These, however, are but the external facts forming the framework within which the moral and intellectual ferment of the thirteenth century moved and worked ; and in grouping in a few paragraphs the well-known outlines of the political events of that age we are merely tracing the skeleton of the living forces of the time. In many ways the thirteenth century created by anticipation much of the Renascence that we associate with the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was a revival or new era, deeper, purer, more constructive than the latter movement, which we commonly speak of as *Renaissance*. This superfluous Gallicism is a term which we should do well to drop ; for it suggests a national character to a European movement ; it implies a new birth, in the spirit of mendacious vanity, so characteristic of the age of Cellinis and Aretinos ; and it expresses the negative side of what was largely a mere evolution of the past. As a creative movement, the profound uprising of intellect and soul concentrated in Dante was a far nobler and more potent effort than any form of classical revival. The movement we associate with the epoch of Leo X., of Francis I., and Charles V. was only one of the series of European efforts to realise a more complete type of moral and social life ; and of them all it was the one most deeply tainted with the spirit of vanity, of impurity, and of anarchy. Of all the epochs of effort after a new life, that of the age of Aquinas, Roger Bacon, St. Francis, St. Louis, Giotto, and Dante is the most purely spiritual, the most really constructive, and indeed the most truly philosophic.

Between the epoch of Charlemagne and the revolutionary reconstruction of the present century we may count at least four marked periods of concerted effort in Western Europe to found a broader and higher type of society. European civilisation advances, no doubt, in a way which is most irregular, and yet in the long run continuous. But we may still trace very distinct periods of special activity and common upheaval. One of these periods is the age of Hildebrand, the great Norman chiefs, Lanfranc, Anselm, and the first Crusade. The second period is that which opens with Innocent III. and closes with Dante. The third is the classical revival from Louis XI. to Charles V. The fourth is the philosophic and scientific movement of the age of Voltaire, Diderot, and Hume, which preceded the great revolutionary wars. The first two movements, in the golden age of Popes and Crusades, were sincere attempts to reform society on a Catholic and Feudal basis. They did not succeed, but they were both inspired with great and beautiful ideals. And the movement of the thirteenth century was more humane, more intellectual, more artistic, more original, and more poetic than that of the eleventh century. The so-called *Renaissance*, or Humanistic Revival, was a time of extraordinary brilliancy and energy; but it was avowedly based on insurrection and destruction, and it was an utterly premature attempt to found an intellectual humanism without either real humanity or sound scientific knowledge. And the age of Voltaire, though it had both humanity and science, was even more destructive in its aim; for it erected negation into its own creed, and proposed to regenerate mankind by 'stamping out the infamy' (of religion).

It follows then that, if we are to select any special period for the birth of a regenerate and developed modern society, we may take the age of Dante, 1265–1321, as that which witnessed the mighty transformation from a world which still trusted in the faith of a Catholic and Feudal constitution of society to a world which was teeming with ideas and wants incompatible with Catholic or Feudal systems altogether. The whole thirteenth century was crowded with creative forces in philosophy, art, poetry, and statesmanship as rich as those of the Humanist *Renaissance*. And if we are accustomed to look on them as so much more limited and rude, it is because we forget how very few and poor were their resources and their instruments. In creative genius, Giotto is the peer, if not the superior, of Raphael. Dante had all the qualities of his three chief successors — and very much more besides. It is a tenable view that, in pure inventive fertility and in imaginative range, those vast composite creations — the cathedrals of the thirteenth century — in all their wealth of architecture, statuary, painted glass, enamels, embroideries, and inexhaustible decorative work, may be set beside the entire painting of the sixteenth century. Albert and Aquinas, in philosophic range, had no peer until we come down to Descartes. Nor was Roger Bacon surpassed in versatile audacity of genius and in true encyclopædic grasp, by any thinker between him and his namesake, the Chancellor. In statesmanship, and all the qualities of the born leader of men, we can only match the great chiefs of the thirteenth century by comparing them with the greatest names three or even four centuries later.

The thirteenth century was indeed an abortive revival. It was a failure: but a splendid failure. Men as great as any the world has known in thought, in art, in action, profoundly believed that society could be permanently organised on Catholic and Feudal lines. It was an illusion; but it was neither an unworthy nor an inexcusable illusion; for there were great resources, both in Catholic and in Feudal powers. And it was not possible for the greatest minds, after the thousand years of interval which had covered Europe since the age of the Antonines, to understand how vast were the defects of their own age in knowledge, in the arts of life, and in social organisation. They had no ancient world, or what we call to-day, the Revival of Learning; they had no real science; and even the ordinary commonplaces of every Greek and Roman were to them a profound mystery. What was even worse, they did not know how much they needed to know: they had no measure of their own ignorance. And thus even intellects like those of Albert, Aquinas, and Dante could still dream of a final co-ordination of human knowledge on the lines of some subjective recasting of the Catholic verities. And they naturally imagined that, after all, society could be saved by some regeneration of the Church — though we now see that this was far less possible than to expect Pope Boniface eventually to turn out a saint, like Bernard of Clairvaux or Francis of Assisi.

And just as the men of intellect still believed that it was possible to recast the Catholic scheme, so men of action still believed it possible to govern nations on the Feudal scheme, and with the help of the feudal magnates. For a time all through the thirteenth century, men of very noble character or of commanding genius did manage to govern in this way, by the help first of the churchmen, then of the growing townships, and by constantly exhausting their own barons in foreign expeditions. Philip Augustus, Blanche, St. Louis, and Philip the Fair held their own by a combination of high qualities and fortunate conditions. In England the infamous John and his foolish son forced the feudal chiefs to become statesmen themselves. Edward I., Rudolph of Hapsburg, Albert of Austria, Henry of Luxembourg, succeeded in marshalling their fierce baronial squadrons. But it could only be done by extraordinary skill and fortune, and even then but for a short time. After them, for nearly two hundred years, Europe was delivered over to an orgie of feudal anarchy. The dreadful Hundred Years' War between France and England, the wars of succession, the Wars of the Roses, the dismemberment of France, the confusion of Spain, the decadence of the Empire ensued.

Thus the political history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is a record of bloodshed and anarchy, until men like the grim Louis XI., Ferdinand V. and Charles V., and the Tudors in England finally succeeded in mastering Feudalism by the aid of the middle classes and middle-class statesmen. But, as neither middle class nor middle-class statesmen existed in the thirteenth century, the kings were forced to do the best they could with their feudal resources. What they did was often very good, and sometimes truly wonderful. It could not permanently succeed; but its very failure was a grand experiment. And thus, whether in the spiritual and intellectual world, or in the political and social world, the thirteenth century — the last great effort of the Middle Ages — was doomed to inevitable disappointment, because the preceding thousand years of history had deprived it of the only means by which success was possible.

The unmistakable sign that the real force of Catholicism was exhausted may be read in the transfer of the intellectual leadership from the monasteries to the schools, from the churchmen to the doctors. And this transfer was thoroughly effected in the thirteenth century. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the spiritual and philosophic guidance of mankind was in the hands of true monks. Clugny, Clairvaux, St. Denis, Bec, Canterbury, Merton, Malmesbury, Glastonbury, and Croyland sent out teachers and rulers. St. Bernard managed to silence Abailard. But in the thirteenth century it is not the monasteries but the universities that hold up the torch. Paris, Oxford, Montpellier, and the like were wholly secular schools; for though the leading doctors and professors of this age are still nominally churchmen, and even monks, their whole moral and mental attitude, and the atmosphere of their schools, are strictly secular, and not monastic. Within two generations the Dominican and Franciscan houses, founded at the beginning of the century in such a whirlwind of ecstatic devotion, became celebrated schools of learning and secular education, so that Aquinas has almost as little of the missionary passion of St. Dominic as Roger Bacon has of the mystic tenderness of St. Francis. It is a fact of deep significance that, within a generation of the foundation of the Mendicant Orders, the Descartes and the Bacon of the thirteenth century were both on the roll of the Friars. So rapidly did mystic theology tend to develop into free inquiry. It would be hard to find anything more utterly unlike the saintly ideal of monasticism than were Paris and Oxford at the end of the thirteenth century. Its whole intellectual character may be measured by the light of these two famous seminaries of the new thought.

It was the great age of the schools we call universities, for though those of Italy belong to an earlier age, the thirteenth century gave full stature to the universities of Paris, and of Oxford, of Orleans, Toulouse, and Montpellier, of Cordova, Seville, and Toledo. That of Paris received from Philip Augustus in 1215 (the year of our Great Charter) her formal constitution, and all through the thirteenth century her 'nations' of twenty thousand students formed the main intellectual centre of Europe. The University of Oxford was hardly second to that of Paris; and though the history of the Oxford schools is in its origin obscure, and even local, in the thirteenth century we can trace the definite constitution of the university and the momentous foundation of the colleges, when Walter de Merton, in the reign of Edward I., gave statutes to Merton College. Thus the origin of our great English university is almost exactly coeval with the origin of our English Parliament.

The same age also witnessed the revival of rational philosophy after its long sleep of a thousand years. Intellects quite as powerful as those of the Greek thinkers took up the task of constructing a harmony of general ideas on the ground where it had been left by the Alexandrine successors of Aristotle and Plato. The best teachers of the thirteenth century had conceptions and aims very far broader and more real than those of Abailard, of William of Champeaux, or John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, who were little more than theological logicians. The thirteenth century had an instrument of its own, at least as important to human progress as the classical revival of the fifteenth century. This was the recovery in substance of the works of Aristotle. By the middle of the thirteenth century the entire works of Aristotle were more or less sufficiently known. For the most part they were translated from the Arabic, where they had lain hid for six centuries, like papyri discovered in an Egyptian mummy case. They were made known by Alexander Hales at Paris, by Albert the Great and Aquinas, his pupil and successor. Albert of Cologne, the 'Universal Doctor,' as they called him, might himself, by virtue of his encyclopædic method, be styled the Aristotle of the thirteenth century, as St. Bonaventura, the 'Seraphic Doctor,' the mystical metaphysician, may be called the Plato of the thirteenth century. Roger Bacon, the Oxford Franciscan, is even yet but imperfectly known to us, though he is often compared, not unfavourably, with his famous namesake, the author of the *Novum Organum*. But, in spite of the amazing ingenuity of the founder of natural philosophy in modern Europe, we can hardly hesitate to place above all his contemporaries — the 'Angelic Doctor,' Thomas Aquinas, the Descartes of the thirteenth century, and beyond doubt the greatest philosophic mind between Aristotle and Descartes.

Albert, Roger, Thomas, combined, as did Aristotle and Descartes, the science of nature with the philosophy of thought; and, though we look back to the *Opus Majus* of Roger Bacon with wonder and admiration for his marvellous anticipatory guesses of modern science, we cannot doubt that Aquinas was truly the mightier intellect. Roger Bacon was, indeed, four centuries in advance of his age — on his own age and on succeeding ages he produced no influence at all. But Aquinas was 'the master of those who know' for all Christian thinkers from his death, in 1274, until the age of Francis Bacon and Descartes. Roger Bacon, like Leonardo da Vinci, or Giordano Bruno, or Spinoza, belongs to the order of intellectual pioneers, who are too much in advance of their age and of its actual resources to promote civilisation as they might do, or even to make the most of their own extraordinary powers.

An age which united aspiring intellect, passionate devotion, and constructive power, naturally created a new type of sacred art. The pointed architecture, that we call Gothic, had its rise, its development, its highest splendour in the thirteenth century, to which we owe all that is most lovely in the churches of Chartres, Amiens, Reims, Paris, Bourges, Strasburg, Cologne, Burgos, Toledo, Westminster, Salisbury, and Lincoln. It is true that there are some traces of the pointed style in France in the twelfth century, at St. Denis, at Sens, and at Lâon; but the true glories of this noble art belong, in France, to the reigns of Philip Augustus and of St. Louis; in England, to those of Henry III. and Edward I. In these two countries we must seek the origin of this wonderful creation of human art, of which Chartres, Amiens, and Westminster are the central examples. These glorious fanes of the thirteenth century were far more than works of art: they were at once temples, national monuments, museums, schools, musical academies, and parliament halls, where the whole people gathered to be trained in every form of art, in all kinds of knowledge, and in all modes of intellectual cultivation. They were the outgrowth of the whole civilisation of their age, in a manner so complete and intense, that its like was never before seen, except on the Acropolis of Athens, in the age of Æschylus and Pericles. It is not enough to recall the names of the master masons — Robert de Luzarches, Robert de Coucy, Erwin of Steinbach, and Pierre de Montereau. These vast temples are the creation of generations of men and the embodiment of entire epochs; and he who would know the Middle Ages should study in detail every carved figure, every painted window, each canopy, each relief, each portal in Amiens, or Chartres, Reims, Bourges, Lincoln, or Salisbury, and he will find revealed to him more than he can read in a thousand books.

Obviously the thirteenth century is the great age of architecture — the branch of art which of all the arts of form is at once the most social, the most comprehensive, and the most historic. Great buildings include sculpture, painting, and all the decorative arts together; they require the co-operation of an entire people; and they are, in a peculiar manner, characteristic of their age. The special arts of form are more associated with individual genius. These, as was natural, belong to centuries later than the thirteenth. But, even in the thirteenth, sculpture gave us the peopled portals and the exquisite canopies of our northern cathedrals, the early palaces of Venice, and the carvings of Nicolas and John of Pisa, which almost anticipate Ghiberti and Donatello. And in painting, Cimabue opens in this century the long roll of Italian masters, and Giotto was already a youth of glorious promise, before the century was closed.

The literature of the thirteenth century does not, in the strict sense of the term, stand forth with such special brilliancy as its art, its thought, and its political activity. As in most epochs of profound stirring of new ideas and of great efforts after practical objects, the energy of the age was not devoted to the composition of elaborate works. It was natural that Dante should be a century later than Barbarossa and Innocent, and that Petrarch of Vaucluse should be a century later than Francis of Assisi. But the thirteenth century was amply represented, both in poetry, romance, and prose history. All of these trace their fountain-heads to an earlier age, and all of them were fully developed in a later age. But French prose may be said to have first taken form in the chronicle of Villehardouin at the opening of the century, and the chronicle of Joinville at its close. The same century also added to the Catholic Hymnal some of the most powerful pieces in that glorious Anthology — the *Dies Iræ*, the *Stabat Mater*, the grand hymns of Aquinas, of Bonaventura, and of Thomas of Celano. It produced also that rich repertory of devotional story, the *Golden Legend* of Voragine. It was, moreover, the thirteenth century which produced the main part of the *Roman de la Rose*, the favourite reading of the Middle Ages, some of the best forms of the Arthurian cycle, Rutebœuf and the French lyrists, some of the most brilliant of the Troubadours, Sordello, Brunetto Latini, Guido Cavalcanti, and the precursors and associates of Dante.

As to Dante himself, it is not easy to place him in a survey of the thirteenth century. In actual date and in typical expression he belongs to it, and yet he does not belong to it. The century itself has a transitional, an ambiguous character. And Dante, like it, has a transitional and double office. He is the poet, the prophet, the painter of the Middle Ages. And yet, in so many things, he anticipates the modern mind and modern art. In actual date, the last year of the thirteenth century is the 'middle term' of the poet's life, his thirty-fifth year. Some of his most exquisite work was already produced, and his whole mind was grown to maturity. On the other hand, every line of the *Divine Comedy* was actually written in the fourteenth century, and the poet lived in it for twenty years. Nor was the entire vision complete until near the poet's death in 1321. In spirit, in design, in form, this great creation has throughout this double character. By memory, by inner soul, by enthusiasm, Dante seems to dwell with the imperial chiefs of Hohenstaufen, with Francis and Dominic, Bernard and Aquinas. He paints the Catholic and Feudal world; he seems saturated with the Catholic and Feudal sentiment. And yet he deals with popes, bishops, Church, and conclaves with the audacious intellectual freedom of a Paris dialectician or an Oxford doctor. Between the lines of the great Catholic poem we can read the death-sentence of Catholic Church and Feudal hierarchy. Like all great artists, Dante paints a world which only subsisted in ideal and in memory, just as Spenser and Shakespeare transfigured in their verse a humanistic and romantic society such as had long disappeared from the region of fact. And for this reason, and for others, it were better to regard the sublime *Dies Iræ*, which the Florentine wanderer chanted in his latter years over the grave of the Middle Ages, as belonging in its inner spirit to a later time, and as being in reality the dawn of modern poetry.

In Dante, as in Giotto, in Frederick II., in Edward I., in Roger Bacon, we may hear the trumpet which summoned the Middle Ages into the modern world. The true spirits of the thirteenth century, still Catholic and Feudal, are Innocent III., St. Francis, Stephen Langton, Grossetête, Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Albert of Cologne; Philip Augustus, St. Louis, the Barons of Runnymede, and Simon de Montfort; the authors of the *Golden Legend* and the Catholic Hymns, the Doctors of Paris, Oxford, and Bologna; the builders of Amiens, Notre Dame, Lincoln, and Westminster.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT THE REVOLUTION OF 1789 DID.[1]

> 'Tout ce que je vois, jette les semences d'une révolution qui arrivera immanquablement. . . . Les Français arrivent tard à tout, mais enfin ils arrivent. . . . Alors, ce sera un beau tapage. Les jeunes gens sont bien heureux; ils verront de belles choses.' — VOLTAIRE.

THE movement known as the Revolution of 1789 was a transformation — not a convulsion; it was constructive even more than destructive; and if it was in outward manifestation a chaotic *revolution*, in its inner spirit it was an organic *evolution*. It was a movement in no sense local, accidental, temporary, or partial; it was not simply, nor even mainly, a political movement. It was an intellectual and religious, a moral, social, and economic movement, before it was a political movement, and even more than it was a political movement.

If it is French in form, it is European in essence. It belongs to modern history as a whole quite as much as to the eighteenth century in France. Its germs began centuries earlier than the generation of 1789, and its activity will long outlast the generation of 1889. It is not an episode of frenzy in the life of a single nation. In all its deeper elements it is a condensation of the history of mankind, a repertory of all social and political problems, the latest and most complex of all the great crises through which our race has passed.

Let us avoid misunderstanding of what we are now speaking. Most assuredly the close of the eighteenth century in France displayed a convulsion, a frenzy, a chaos such as the world's history has not often equalled. There was folly, crime, waste, destruction, confusion, and horror of stupendous proportions, and of all imaginable forms. There was the Terror, the Festival of Reason, the Reaction, and all the delirium, the orgy, the extravagance, which give brilliancy to small historians and serve as rhetoric to petty politicians. Assuredly the revolution closed in with most ghastly surprises to the philanthropists and philosophers who entered on it in 1789 with so light a heart. Assuredly it has bequeathed to the statesmen and the people of our century problems of portentous difficulty and number. But we are speaking now neither of '93 nor of '95, nor of '99, of no local or special incident, of no single event, nor of political forms. We are in this essay dealing exclusively with 'the ideas of '89,' with the movement which at Versailles, on 5th May 1789, took outward and visible shape. And we are about to deal with it in its deeper, social, permanent, and human side, not in its transitory and material side. The Seine, the Loire, and the Rhone have washed away the blood which once defiled their streams, the havoc caused by the orgies of anarchy has been effaced, years make fainter the memory of crimes and follies, of revenge and jealousy. But the course of generations still deepens the meaning of 'the ideas of '89,' of the social, intellectual, economic new birth which then received official recognition, opening in a conscious and popular form the reformation that, in a spontaneous form, had long been brooding in so many generous hearts and profound brains.

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xlv. N.S. June 1889.

No reading of merely French history, no study of the reign of Louis XVI. by itself, can explain this great movement — no political history, no narrative of events, no account of any special institution. Neither the degeneration of the monarchy, nor the corruption of the nobility, nor the disorder of the administration, nor the barbarism of the feudal law, nor the decay of the Church, nor the vices of society, nor the teaching of any school, nor all of these together — are adequate to explain the revolution. They are enough to account for the confusion, waste, conflict, and fury of the contest — *i.e.* for the explosion. But they do not explain how it is that hardly anything was set up in France between 1789 and 1799 which had not been previously discussed and prepared, that between 1789 and 1799 an immense body of new institutions and reformed methods of social life were firmly planted in such a way that they have borne fruit far and wide in France and through Europe. Nor do any of these special causes just enumerated suffice to explain the passion, the contagious faith, the almost religious fanaticism which was the inner strength of the revolution and the source of its inexhaustible activity. What we call the French Revolution of 1789, was really a new phase of civilisation announcing its advent in form. It had the character of religious zeal because it was a movement of the human race towards a completer humanity.

Rhetoricians, poets, and preachers have accustomed us too long to dwell on the lurid side of the movement, on its follies, crimes, and failures; they have overrated the relative importance of the catastrophe, and by profuse pictures of the horrors, they have drawn off attention from its solid and enduring fruits. In the midst of the agony it was natural that Burke, in the sunset of his judgment, should denounce it. But it was a misfortune for the last generation that the purple mantle of Burke should have fallen on a prophet, who was not a statesman but a man of letters, who, with all Burke's passion and prejudice, had but little of his philosophic power, none of his practical sagacity, none of the great Whig's experience of affairs and of men. The 'universal bonfire' theory, the 'grand suicide' view, the 'chaos-come-again' of a former generation, are seen to be ridiculous in ours. The movement of 1789 was far less the final crash of an effete system than it was the new birth of a greater system, or rather of the irresistible germs of a greater system. The contemporaries of Tacitus, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius could see nothing but ruin in the superstition of the Galileans, just as the contemporaries of Decius, Julian, and Justinian saw nothing but barbarism in the Goths, the Franks, and the Arabs.

The year 1789, more definitely than any other date marks any other transition, marks the close of a society which had existed for some thousands of years as a consistent whole, a society more or less based upon military force, intensely imbued with the spirit of hereditary right, bound up with ideas of theological sanction, sustained by a scheme of supramundane authority; a society based upon caste, on class, on local distinctions and personal privilege, rooted in inequality, political, social, material, and moral; a society of which the hope of salvation was the maintenance of the *status quo*, and of which the Ten Commandments were Privilege. And the same year, 1789, saw the official installation of a society which was essentially based on peace, the creed of which was industry, equality, progress; a society where change was the evidence of life, the end of which was social welfare, and the means social co-operation and human equity. Union, communion, equality, equity, merit, labour, justice, consolidation, fraternity — such were the devices and symbols of the new era. It is therefore with justice that modern Europe regards the date 1789 as a date that marks a greater evolution in human history more distinctly than, perhaps, any other single date which could be named between the reign of the first Pharaoh and the reign of Victoria.

One of the cardinal pivots in human history we call this epoch, and not at all a French local crisis. The proof of this is complete. All the nations of Europe, and indeed the people of America, contributed their share to the movement, and more or less partook in the movement themselves. It was hailed as a new dispensation by men of various race; and each nation in turn more or less added to the movement and adopted some element of the movement. The intellectual and social upheaval, which for generations had been preparing the movement, was common to the enlightened spirits of Europe and also to the Transatlantic Continent. The effects of the movement have been shared by all Europe, and the distant consequences of its action are visible in Europe to the third and the fourth generations. And lastly, all the cardinal features of the movement of 1789 are in no sense locally French, or of special national value. They are equally applicable to Europe, and indeed to advanced human societies everywhere. They appeal to men primarily, and to Frenchmen secondarily. They relate to the general society of Europe, and not to specific national institutions. They concern the transformation of a feudal, hereditary, privileged, authoritative society, based on *antique right* into a republican, industrial, equalised, humanised society, based on a scientific view of the *Common Weal*. But this is not a national idea, a French conception of local application. It is European, or rather human. And thus, however disastrous to France may have been the travail of the movement officially proclaimed in 1789, from a European and a human point of view it has abiding and pregnant issues. May we profit by its good whilst we are spared its evil.

Obviously, the salient form of the revolution was French, ultra-French; entirely unique and of inimitable peculiarity in some of its worst as well as its best sides. The delirium, the extravagances, the hysterics, and the brutalities which succeeded one another in a series of strange tragicomic tableaux from 1789 till 1795, were most intensely French, though even they, from Caps of Liberty to Festival of Pikes, have had a singular fascination for the revolutionists of every race. But the picturesque and melodramatic accessories of the revolution have been so copiously over-coloured by the scene-painters and stage-carpenters of history, that we are too often apt to forget how essentially European the revolution was in all its deeper meanings.

A dozen kings and statesmen throughout Europe were, in a way, endeavouring to enter on the same path as Louis XVI. with Turgot and Necker. In spite of the contrast between the government of England and the government of France, between the condition of English industry and that of France, Walpole and Pitt offer many striking points of analogy with Turgot and Necker. The intellectual commerce between England and France from (let us say) 1725 to 1790 is one of the most memorable episodes in the history of the human mind. The two generations which followed the visit of Voltaire to England formed an intellectual alliance between the leading spirits of our two nations: an alliance of amity, offensive and defensive, scientific, economic, philosophical, social, and political, such as had not been seen since the days of the Greco-Roman education or the cosmopolitan fellowship of mediæval universities. Voltaire, Montesquieu, Hume, Adam Smith, Franklin, Turgot, Quesnay, Diderot, Condorcet, d'Argenson, Gibbon, Washington, Priestley, Bentham—even Rousseau, Mabli, Mirabeau, and Jefferson—belonged to a

Republic of Ideas, where national character and local idiosyncrasy could indeed be traced in each, but where the essential patriotism of humanity is dominant and supreme.

In England, Pitt; in Prussia, Frederick; in Austria, Joseph; in Tuscany, Leopold; in Portugal, Pombal; in Spain, d'Aranda; all laboured to an end, essentially similar, in reforming the incoherent, unequal, and obsolete state of the law; in rectifying abuses in finance; in bringing some order into administration, in abolishing some of the burdens and chains on industry; in improving the material condition of their states; in curbing the more monstrous abuses of privilege; and in founding at least the germs of what we call modern civilised government. Some of these things were done ill, some well, most of them tentatively and with a naïve ignorance of the tremendous forces they were handling, with a strange childishness of conception, and in all cases without a trace of suspicion that they were changing the sources of power and their political constitution. And in all this the rulers were led and inspired by a crowd of economical and social reformers who eagerly proclaimed Utopia at hand, and who mistook generous ideals for scientific knowledge. For special causes the great social evolution concentrated itself in France towards the latter half of the eighteenth century; but there was nothing about it exclusively French. Socially and economically viewed, it was almost more English and Anglo-American than French; intellectually and morally viewed, it was hardly more French than it was English. Hume, Adam Smith, Burke, and Priestley are as potent in the realm of thought as Diderot, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Condorcet. And in the realm of social reform, Europe owes as much to Bentham, Howard, Clarkson, Franklin, Washington, Pitt, and Frederick, as it does to Turgot, Mirabeau, Girondins, Cordeliers, or Jacobins. The 'ideas of '89,' were the ideas of the best brains and most humane spirits in the advanced nations of mankind. All nations bore their share in the labour, and all have shared in the fruits.

But if the revolution were so general in its preparation, why was the active manifestation of it concentrated in France? and why was France speedily attacked by all the nations of Europe? These two questions may be answered in two words. In France only were the old and the new elements ranged face to face without intermixture or contact, with nothing between them but a decrepit and demoralised autocracy. And no sooner had the inevitable collision begun, than the governments of Europe were seized with panic as they witnessed the fury of the revolutionary forces. In England the Reformation, the Civil War, the Revolution of 1689, and the Hanoverian dynasty had transferred the power of the monarchy to a wealthy, energetic, popular aristocracy, which had largely abandoned its feudal privileges, and had closely allied itself with the interests of wealth. During two centuries of continual struggle and partial reform, a compromise had been affected in Church and in State, wherein the claims of king, priest, noble, and merchant had been fused into a tolerable *modus vivendi.* In France the contrary was the case. During two centuries the monarchy had steadily asserted itself as the incarnation of the public, claiming for itself all public rights, and undertaking (in theory) all public duties; crushing out the feudal authorities from all national duties, but guaranteeing to them intact the whole of their personal privileges. As it had dealt with the aristocracy so it dealt with the Church; making both its tool, filling both with corruption, and giving them in exchange nothing but license to exploit the lay commonalty. The lay commonalty naturally expanded in rooted hostility to the privileged orders, and to the religious and hereditary ideas on which privilege rested. It grew stronger every day, having no admixture with the old orders, no points of contact, having no outlet for its activity, harassed, insulted, pillaged, and rebuffed at every turn, twenty-six millions strong against two hundred thousand; all distinctions, rivalries, and authority, as amongst this *tiers état*, uniformly crushed by the superincumbent weight of Monarchy, Church, and Privilege.

The vast mass of the people thus grew consolidated, without a single public outlet for its energies, or the smallest opportunity for experience in affairs; the whole ability of the nation for politics, administration, law, or war, was forced into abstract speculation and social discussion; conscious that it was the real force and possessed the real wealth of the nation; increasing its resources day by day, amidst frightful extortion and incredible barbarism, which it was bound to endure without a murmur; the thinking world, to whom action was closed, kept watching the tremendous problems at stake in their most naked and menacing aspect, without any disguise, compromise, or alleviation. And in France, where the old feudal and ecclesiastical system was concentrated in its most aggravated form, there it was also the weakest, most corrupt, and most servile. And there, too, in France the *tiers état* was the most numerous, the most consolidated, the most charged with ideas, the most sharply separated off, the most conscious of its power, the most exasperated by oppression. Thus it came about that a European evolution broke out in France into revolution. The social battle of the eighteenth century began in the only nation which was strictly marshalled in two opposing camps; where the oppressors were utterly enfeebled by corruption; where the oppressed were fermenting with ideas and boiling with indignation.

The fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries saw the silent universal but unobserved dissolution of the old mediæval society. For crusades the soldier took to the puerilities of the tournament. The lordly castles fell one by one before the strong hand of the king. The humble village expanded into the great trading town. The Church was torn by factions and assailed by heresies. The musket-ball destroyed the supremacy of the mailed knight. The printing-press made science and thought the birthright of all. The sixteenth century saw a temporary resettlement in a strong dominant monarchy and a compromise in religion. Whilst the seventeenth century in England gave power to a transformed and modified aristocracy, in France it concentrated the whole public forces in a monstrous absolutism, whilst nobility and Church grew daily more rife with obsolete oppression. Hence, in France, the ancient monarchy stood alone as the centre of the old system. Beside it stood the new elements unfettered and untransformed. It was the simplicity of the problem, the glaring nature of the contrast, which caused the intensity of the explosion. The old system stood with dry-rot in its heart; the new was bursting with incoherent hopes and undefined ideals. The Bastille fell — and a new era began.

Take a rapid survey of France in the closing years of the Monarchy. She had not recovered the desolation of the long wars of Louis XIV., the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the banishment of the Protestants, the monstrous extravagance of Versailles and the corrupt system which was there concentrated. The entire authority was practically absorbed by the Crown, whilst the most incredible confusion and disorganisation reigned throughout the administration. A network of incoherent authorities crossed, recrossed, and embarrassed each other throughout the forty provinces. The law, the customs, the organisation of the provinces, differed from each other. Throughout them existed thousands of hereditary offices without responsibility, and sinecures cynically created for the sole purpose of being sold. The administration of justice was as completely incoherent as the public service. Each province, and often each district, city, or town, had special tribunals with peculiar powers of its own and anomalous methods of jurisdiction. There were nearly four hundred different codes of customary law. There were civil tribunals, military tribunals, commercial tribunals, exchequer tribunals, ecclesiastical tribunals, and manorial tribunals. A vast number of special causes could only be heard in special courts: a vast body of privileged persons could only be sued before special judges. If civil justice was in a state of barbarous complication and confusion, criminal justice was even more barbarous. Preliminary torture before trial, mutilation, ferocious punishments, a lingering death by torment, a penal code which had death or bodily mutilation in every page, were dealt out freely to the accused without the protection of counsel, the right of appeal, or even a public statement of the sentence. For ecclesiastical offences, and these were a wide and vague field, the punishment was burning alive. Loss of the tongue, of eyes, of limbs, and breaking on the wheel, were common punishments for very moderate crimes. Madame Roland tells us how the summer night was made hideous by the yells of wretches dying by inches after the torture of the wheel. With this state of justice there went systematic corruption in the judges, bribery of officials from the highest to the lowest, and an infinite series of exactions and delays in trial. To all but the rich and the privileged, a civil cause portended ruin, a criminal accusation was a risk of torture and death.

The public finances were in even more dreadful confusion than public justice. The revenue was farmed to companies and to persons who drew from it enormous gains, in some cases, it is said, cent. per cent. The deficit grew during the reign of Louis XV. at the rate of four or five millions sterling each year; and by the end of the reign of Louis XVI. the deficit had grown to eight or ten millions a year. But as to the exact deficit for each year, or as to the total debt of the nation, no man could speak. Louis XV. in one year personally consumed eight millions sterling, and one of his mistresses alone received during her reign a sum of more than two millions. Just before the Revolution the total taxation of all kinds amounted to some sixty millions sterling. Of this not more than half was spent in the public service. The rest was the plunder of the privileged, in various degrees, from king to the mistress's lackey. This enormous taxation was paid mainly by the non-privileged, who were less than twenty-six millions. The nobles, the clergy, were exempt from property-tax, though they held between them more than half of the entire land of France. The State could only raise loans at a rate of twenty per cent.

With an army of less than 140,000 men, there were 60,000 officers, in active service or on half-pay, all of them exclusively drawn from the privileged class. Twelve thousand prelates and dignified clergy had a revenue of more than two millions sterling. Four millions more was divided amongst some 60,000 minor priests. Altogether the privileged orders, having hereditary rank or ecclesiastical office, numbered more than 200,000 persons. Besides these, some 50,000 families were entitled to hereditary office of a judicial sort, who formed the 'nobility of the robe.' The trades and merchants were organised in privileged gilds, and every industry was bound by a network of corporate and local restrictions. Membership of a gild was a matter of purchase. Not only was each gild a privileged corporation, but each province was fiscally a separate state, with its local dues, local customs' tariff, and special frontiers. In the south of France alone there were some 4000 miles of internal customs' frontier. An infinite series of dues were imposed in confusion over districts selected by hazard or tradition. An article would sell in one province for ten times the price it would have in another province. The dues chargeable on the navigation of a single river amounted, we are told, to thirty per cent. of the value of the goods carried.

But these abuses were trifling or at least endurable when set beside the abuses which crushed the cultivation of the soil. About a fifth of the soil of France was in mortmain, the inalienable property of the Church. Nearly half the soil was held in big estates, and was tilled on the *métayer* system. About one-third of it was the property of the peasant. But though the property of the peasant, it was bound, as he was bound, by an endless list of restrictions. In the Middle Ages each fief had been a kingdom of itself; each lord a petty king; the government, the taxation, the regulation of each fief, was practically the national government, the public taxation, and the social institutions. But in France, whilst the national authority had passed from the lord of the fief to the national Crown, the legal privileges, the personal and local exemptions, were preserved intact. The peasant remained for many practical purposes a serf, even whilst he owned his own farm. A series of dues were payable to the lord; personal services were still exacted; special rights were in full vigour. The peasant, proprietor as he was, still delved the lord's land, carted his produce, paid his local dues, made his roads. All this had to be done without payment, as *corvée*, or forced labour tax. The peasants were in the position of a people during a most oppressive state of siege, when a foreign army is in occupation of a country. The foreign army was the privileged order. Everything and every one outside of this order was the subject of oppressive *requisition*. The lord paid no taxes on his lands, was not answerable to the ordinary tribunals, was practically exempt from the criminal law, had the sole right of sporting, could alone serve as an officer in the army, could alone aspire to any office under the Crown. In one province alone during a single reign two thousand tolls were abolished. There were tolls on bridges, on ferries, on paths, on fairs, on markets. There were rights of warren, rights of pigeon-houses, of chase, and fishing. There were dues payable on the birth of an heir, on marriage, on the acquisition of a new property by the lord, dues payable for fire, for the passage of a flock, for pasture, for wood. The peasant was compelled to bring his corn to be ground in the lord's mill, to crush his grapes at the lord's wine-press, to suffer his crops to be devoured by the lord's game and pigeons. A heavy fine was payable on sale or transfer of the property; on every side were due quit-rents, rent-charges, fines, dues in money and in kind, which could not be commuted and could not be redeemed. After the lord's dues came those of the Church, the tithes payable in kind, and other dues and exactions of the spiritual army. And even this was but the domestic side of the picture. After the lord and the Church came the king's officers, the king's taxes, the king's requisitions, with all the multiform oppression, corruption, and peculation of the farmers of the revenue and the intendants of the province.

Under this manifold congeries of more than Turkish misrule, it was not surprising that agriculture was ruined and the country became desolate. A fearful picture of that desolation has been drawn for us by our economist, Arthur Young, in 1787, 1788, 1789. Every one is familiar with the dreadful passages wherein he speaks of haggard men and women wearily tilling the soil, sustained on black bread, roots, and water, and living in smoky hovels without windows; of the wilderness presented by the estates of absentee grandees; of the infinite tolls, dues, taxes, and impositions, of the cruel punishments on smugglers, on the dealers in contraband salt, on poachers, and deserters. It was not surprising that famines were incessant, that the revenue decreased, and that France was sinking into the decrepitude of an Eastern absolutism. 'For years,' said d'Argenson, 'I have watched the ruin increasing. Men around me are now starving like flies, or eating grass.' There were thirty thousand beggars, and whole provinces living on occasional alms, two thousand persons in prison for smuggling salt alone. Men were imprisoned by *lettres de cachet* by the thousand.

This state of things was only peculiar to France by reason of the vast area over which it extended, of the systematic scale on which it was worked, and the intense concentration of the evil. In substance it was common to Europe. It was the universal legacy of the feudal system, and the general corruption of hereditary government. In England, four great crises, that of 1540, 1648, 1688, and 1714, had very largely got rid of these evils. But they existed in even greater intensity in Ireland and partly in Scotland; they flourished in the East of Europe in full force; the corruption of government was as great in the South of Europe. The profligacy of Louis XV. was hardly worse in spirit, though it was more disgusting than that of Charles II. The feudalism of Germany and Austria was quite as barbarous as that of France. And in Italy and in Spain the Church was more intolerant, more depraved, and more powerful. But in France, the whole of the antique abuses were collected in their most aggravated shape, in the most enormous volume, and with the least of compensating check. In England, the persons with hereditary rank hardly numbered more than a few hundreds, and perhaps the entire families of the noble class did not exceed two thousand; in France they exceeded one hundred thousand. In England the prelates and dignified clergy hardly exceeded one or two hundred; in France they numbered twelve thousand. In England the entire body of ecclesiastics did not number twenty thousand; in France they much exceeded one hundred thousand. In England, no single subject had any personal privilege, except the trifling personal exemptions of a few hundred peers; no exemption from taxation was known to the law; and no land was free from the king's taxes. In France more than half the soil, and two orders, amounting together to over two hundred thousand persons, were exempt. In England, with trifling exceptions, the old feudal rights had become obsolete or nominal. The legal rights of the lord had disappeared, along with his castle, in the great Civil War. In France the lord retained his social prerogatives after losing the whole of his public functions. In Germany, in Italy, in Spain, the lord still retained a large part of his real power, and had been forced to surrender some definite portion of his oppressive privilege.

But in France, where the whole of the ancient abuses existed on a scale and with an organised completeness that was seen nowhere else, there was also the most numerous, the most enlightened, and the most ambitious body of reformers. In presence of this portentous misrule and this outrageous corruption, an army of ardent spirits had been gathered together with a passionate desire to correct it. It was an army recruited from all classes — from the ancient nobility, and even the royal blood, from the lords of the soil, and the dignitaries of the Church, from lawyers, physicians, merchants, artificers; from sons of the petty tradesmen, like Diderot; from sons of the notary, like Voltaire; of the clock-maker, like Rousseau; of the canoness, like d'Alembert; of the provost, like Turgot; of the marquis, like d'Argenson and Condorcet. This band of thinkers belonged to no special class, and to no single country. Intellectually speaking, its real source in the first half of the century was in England, in English ideas of religious and political equality, in English institutions of material good government and industry. In the two generations preceding 1789, such Englishmen as Bolingbroke, Hume, Adam Smith, Priestley, Bentham, John Howard (one might almost claim part, at least, of Burke and of Pitt); such Americans as Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson; such Italians as Beccaria and Galiani; such Germans as Lessing, Goethe, Frederick the Great, and Joseph II., had as much part in it as Voltaire, Montesquieu, Turgot, Diderot, and Condorcet, and the rest of the French thinkers who are specially associated in our thoughts with the movement so ill-described as the French Revolution.

By the efforts of such men every element of modern society, and every political institution as we now know it, had been reviewed and debated — not, indeed, with any coherent doctrine, and utterly without system or method. The reformers differed much amongst themselves, and there were almost as many schemes of political philosophy, of social economy, or practical organisation, as there were writers and speakers. But in the result, what we now call modern Europe emerged, recast in State, in Church, in financial, commercial, and industrial organisation, with a new legal system, a new fiscal system, a humane code, and religious equality. Over the whole of Europe the civil and criminal code was entirely recast; cruel punishments, barbarous sentences, anomalies, and confusion were swept away; the treatment of criminals, of the sick, of the insane, and of the destitute was subjected to a continuous and systematic reform, of which we have as yet seen only the first instalment. The whole range of fiscal taxation, local and imperial, external and internal, direct and indirect, has been in almost every part of Western Europe entirely reformed. A new local administration on the principle of departments, subdivided into districts, cantons, and communes, has been established in France, and thence copied in a large part of Europe. The old feudal system of territorial law, which in England had been to a great extent reformed at the Civil War, was recast not only in France but in the greater part of Western Europe. Protestants, Jews, and Dissenters of all orders practically obtained full toleration and the right of worship. The monstrous corruption and wealth of the remnants of the mediæval Church was reduced to manageable proportions. Public education became one of the great functions of the State. Public health, public morality, science, art, industry, roads, posts, and trade became the substantive business of government. These are 'the ideas of '89'—these are the ideas which for two generations before '89 Europe had been preparing, and which for three generations since '89 she has been systematically working out.

We have just taken a rapid survey of France in its political and material organisation down to 1789, let us take an equally rapid survey of the new institutions which 1789 so loudly proclaimed, and so stormily introduced.

1. For the old patriarchal, proprietary, *de jure* theory of rule, there was everywhere substituted on the continent of Europe the popular, fiduciary, *pro bono publico* notion

of rule. Government ceased to be the privilege of the ruler; it became a trust imposed on the ruler for the common weal of the ruled. Long before 1789 this general idea had been established in England and in the United States. During the whole of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries English political struggles had centred round this grand principle: the Declaration of Independence in 1776 had formulated it in memorable phrases. But how little the full meaning of this — the cardinal idea of 1789 — was completely accepted even in England, the whole history of the reign of George III. may remind us, and the second and reactionary half of the careers of William Pitt and Edmund Burke. Over the continent of Europe, down to 1789, the proprietary *jure divino* theory of privilege existed in full force, except in some petty republics, which were of slight practical consequence. The long war, the reactionary Empire of Napoleon, and the royal reaction which followed its overthrow, made a faint semblance of revival for privilege. But, after the final extinction of the Bourbons in 1830, the idea of privilege disappeared from the conception of the State. In England, the Reform Act of 1832, and finally the European movements of 1848, completed the change. So that throughout Europe, west of Russia and of Turkey, all governments alike — imperial, royal, aristocratic, or republican as they may be in form, exist more or less in fact, and in profession exist exclusively, for the general welfare of the nation. This is the first and central idea of '89.

This idea is, in the deeper meaning of the word, *republican* — so far as republican implies the public good, the common weal as contrasted with privilege, property, or right. But it is not exclusively republican, in the sense that it implies the absence of a single ruler; nor is it necessarily democratic, in the sense of being direct government by numbers. It is an error to assume that the Revolution of 1789 introduced as an abstract doctrine the democratic republic pure and simple. Republics and democracies of many forms grew out of the movement. But the movement itself also threw up many forms of government by a dictator, government by a Council, constitutional monarchy, and democratic imperialism. All of these equally claim to be based on the doctrine of the common weal, and to represent the ideas of '89. And they have ample right to make that claim. The movement of '89, based on the dominant idea of the public good as opposed to privilege, took all kinds of form in the mouths of those who proclaimed it. Voltaire understood it in one way, Montesquieu in another, Diderot in a third, and Rousseau in a fourth. The democratic monarchy of d'Argenson, the constitutional monarchy of Mirabeau, the democratic republic of Marat, the plutocratic republic of Vergniaud, the republican dictatorship of Danton, even the military dictatorship of the First Consul — were all alike different readings of the Bible of '89. It means government by capacity, not by hereditary title, with the welfare of the whole people as its end, and the consent of the governed as its sole legitimate title.

2. The next grand idea of '89 is the scientific consolidation of law, administration, personal right, and local responsibility. Out of the infinite confusion of inequality that the lingering decay of Feudalism during four centuries had left in Europe, France emerged in the nineteenth century with a scientific and uniform code of law, a just and scientific system of land tenure, an admirable system of local organisation, almost absolute equality of persons before the law, and almost complete assimilation of territorial right. The French peasant who in 1789 struck Arthur Young with horror and pity, as the scandal of

Europe, is now the envy of the tillers of the soil in most parts of the continent, and assuredly in these islands. The most barbarous land tenure of the eighteenth century, the most brutal criminal code, the most complicated fabric ever raised by privilege, which France in 1789 exhibited to the scorn of mankind, has given way to the most advanced scheme of personal equality, to the paradise of the peasant proprietor, and to the least feudalised of all codes, which France can exhibit at present. It would be far easier to show in England to-day the unweeded remnants of feudal privilege, of landlord law and landlord justice, and certainly it is easier to show it in Ireland and in Scotland, than it is in France. Territorial oppression, the injustice of the land-laws, the burden of game, or the customary exactions of the landlord, may be found in Ireland, may be found in Scotland, may be found in England — but they have absolutely disappeared in France. Her eight million peasants who own the soil are the masters of their own destiny, for France has now eight million kings, eight million lords of the soil. The 20,000 or 30,000, it may be, who in these islands own the rural lands, should ponder when the turn of their labourers will come to share in 'the ideas of '89.'

3. Down to 1789 France exhibited an amazing chaos of local government institutions. In the nineteenth century she possessed one that was perhaps the most symmetrical, the most scientific, and the most adaptable now extant. It may well be that under it centralisation has been grossly exaggerated and local life suppressed. That, however, is a legacy from the old monarchy, and is not the work of the Revolution. The idea of '89 is not centralisation, but decentralisation. The excessive concentration of power in the hands of a prefect is part of the ancient tradition of France. The aim of d'Argenson, of Turgot, of Mabli,

of Malesherbes, was to give free life to local energy, to restrain the abuses of bureaucracy. There is still in France an oppressive measure of bureaucracy and a monstrous centralisation. But a large part of the continent has adopted from her the organic arrangement of subordinate authorities which the Revolution created, and which may be equally adopted by monarchy, empire, or republic; which may be combined with local self-government as well as with imperial autocracy.

4. Much the same may be said of the law which the Revolution founded. The Civil Code of France, to which so unfairly Napoleon contrived to give his name, was neither the work of Bonaparte, nor of the Empire, nor of the nineteenth century. It was in substance the work of Pothier, of the great lawyers of the eighteenth century, from whose writings four-fifths of it is textually taken; and Tronchet, its true author, is essentially a man of the eighteenth century. It is true that, compared with some modern codes, the Civil Code of France is visibly defective. But, such as it is, it has made the tour of Europe, and is the basis of half the codes now extant. It was the earliest scientific code of modern law, for the Code of Frederick belongs to the world of yesterday, and not of to-day. The Civil Code of France remains still, with all its shortcomings, the great type of a modern code, and is a truly splendid fruit of the ideas of '89.

5. With the Code came in also a scientific recasting of the entire system of justice — civil, criminal, commercial, and constitutional; local and central, primary, intermediate, and supreme. Within a generation at most, to a great extent within a few years, France passed from a system of justice the most complex, cruel, and obsolete, to a system the most symmetrical, humane, and scientific. And that which in England, and in many other countries

of Europe, has been the gradual work of a century, was reached in France almost at a bound by the generation that saw '89.

6. With a new law there came in a new fiscal system, a reform as important, as elaborate as that of the civil code, and we must say quite as successful. The financial condition of France during the whole of the reigns of Louis xv. and Louis xvi. had presented perhaps the most stupendous example of confusion and corruption which could be found outside a Turkish or Asiatic despotism. It was unquestionably the direct, primary, material origin of the Revolution. It was the main object of the labours of the truest reformers of the age. D'Argenson, Turgot, Malesherbes, Necker, and Mirabeau devoted to the appalling task the best of their thoughts and efforts. Before all of them, and before all the names of the century, the noble Turgot stands forth as the very type of the financial reformer. The conditions in which he sacrificed his life in vain efforts were too utterly bad for even his genius and heroic honesty to prevail. But the effort was not in vain. The idea of '89 was to put an end to the monstrous injustice and plunder of the old monarchic and feudal fisc, to establish in its place an equal, just, scientific system of finance. Compared with English finance, the great triumph of parliamentary government, the financial system of modern France seems often defective to us. But as compared with the financial condition of the rest of Europe, the reforms of '89 have practically accomplished the end.

7. Along with a reformed finance came in a reformed tariff, the entire sweeping away of the provincial customs' frontier, that monstrous legacy of feudal disintegration, and a complete revision of the burdens on industry. Political economy as a science may be said to be one of the cardinal ideas of '89; the very conception of a social science,

vaguely and dimly perceived by the great leaders of thought in the eighteenth century, was itself one of the most potent causes, and in some ways, one of the most striking effects of the Revolution of '89. The great founders of the conception of a social science were all prominent chiefs of the movement which culminated in that year. Voltaire, Montesquieu, Diderot, d'Argenson, Turgot, Quesnay, Condorcet, were at once social economists and precursors of the great crisis. Adam Smith was as much an authority in France as he was in England. Political economy and a scientific treatment of the national production and consumption became with the Revolution a cardinal idea of statesmen and publicists. We are apt to think that our French friends are weak-kneed economists at best, and perversely inclined to economic heresy. It may be so. Our free-trade doctrines have been preached to deaf ears, and our gospel of absolute freedom makes but little progress in France. But it can hardly be denied that the economic legislation of France is entirely in accord with economic doctrine in France, or that the political economy of the State is abreast of the demands of public opinion.

8. To pass from purely material interests to moral, social, and spiritual, we must never lose sight of the splendid fact that national education is an idea of '89. A crowd of the great names in the revolutionary movement are honourably identified with this sacred cause. Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Diderot, Turgot, Condorcet, d'Argenson, Mirabeau, Danton — all felt to the depths of their soul that the New Commonwealth could exist only by an enlightened people. Public education was the inspiration of the Encyclopædia; it was the gospel of '89, and the least tarnished of all its legacies to our age. In the midst of the Terror and the war, the Convention pursued its plans of founding a public education. The idea was in no sense specially

French, in no sense the direct work of the revolutionary assemblies. England, America, Germany, Europe as a whole, partook of the new conception of the duties of the State. It belongs to the second half of the eighteenth century altogether. But of all the enthusiasts for popular education, there are no names which will survive longer in the roll of the benefactors of humanity than those of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Turgot, and Condorcet.

9. With popular education there went quite naturally a series of social institutions of a philanthropic sort. Hospitals, asylums, poor-houses, museums, libraries, galleries of art and science, public parks, sanitary appliances, and public edifices were no longer matters of royal caprice, or of casual benefaction: they became the serious work of imperial and municipal government. Almost everything which we know as modern civilisation in these social institutions has taken organic shape and systematic form within these hundred years. Except for its royal palaces, Paris in the opening of the eighteenth century was a squalid, ill-ordered, second-rate city. Marseilles, Lyons, Bordeaux, had neither dignity, beauty, nor convenience. Except for a few royal foundations, neither France, nor its capital, was furnished with more than the meagrest appliances of public health and charitable aid. The care of the sick, of the weak, of the destitute, of children, of the people, the emancipation of the negro — all this is essentially an idea of '89.

10. To sum up all these reforms we must conclude with that of the Church. The Church of France in the eighteenth century, if it were one of the most splendid and the most able, was the most arrogant and oppressive survival of the old Mediæval Catholicism. With an army of more than 50,000 priests, and some 50,000 persons in monasteries and bound by religious vows, owning one-fifth of the soil of France, with a revenue which, in the values of to-

day, approached ten millions sterling, with personal, territorial, and legal privileges without number, the Gallican Church in the age of Voltaire and Diderot was a portent of pride, tyranny, and intolerance. A Church which, down to 1766, could still put Protestants to death with revolting cruelty, which is stained with the damning memories of Calas and La Barre, which was almost as corrupt as the nobility, almost as oppressive as the royalty, which added to the barbarism of the *ancien régime* the savage traditions of the Inquisition, which left undone all that it ought to have done, and did all that it ought not to have done — such a Church cumbered the earth. It fell, and loud and great was the crash, and fierce have been the wailings which still fill the air over its ruins. The world has heard enough and too much of Voltaire's curse against *l'Infâme*, of Diderot's ferocious distich, how the entrails of the last priest should serve as halter to the last king. No one to-day justifies the fury of their diatribes, except by reminding the nineteenth century what it was that, in the eighteenth century, was called the Church of Christ. The Church fell, but it returned again. It revived transformed, reformed, and shorn of its pretensions. Its intolerance has been utterly stript off it. It is now but one of other endowed sects. It has less than one-fifth of its old wealth, none of its old intolerable prerogatives, and but a shadow of its old pretensions and pride.

The present essay proposes to deal with the social and political aspect of the movement of 1789, not with the wide and subtle field of the intellectual and humanitarian movement which was its prelude and spiritual director. But a short notice is needed of the principal leaders of thought by whom the social and political work was inspired. For practical purposes they may be grouped under four general heads. There was the work of destroying the old elements, and the work of constructing the new. The work was intellectual and religious on the one hand, social and political on the other. This suggests a fourfold division: (1) the school of thought whereby the old intellectual system was discredited; (2) that by which the old political system was destroyed; (3) those who laboured to construct a new intellectual and moral basis of society; and (4) those who sought to construct a new social and political system. These schools and teachers, writers and politicians, cannot be rigidly separated from each other. Each overlaps the other, and most of them combine the characteristics of all in more or less degree. The most pugnacious of the critics did something in the way of reconstructing the intellectual basis. The most constructive spirits of the new world did much both directly and indirectly to destroy the old. Critics of the orthodox faith were really destroying the throne and the ancient rule, even when they least designed it. Orthodox supporters of radical reforms rung the knell of the mediæval faith as much as that of the mediæval society. The spiritual and temporal organisation of human life had grown up together; and in death it was not divided.

All through the eighteenth century the intellectual movement was gathering vitality and volume. From the opening years of the epoch the genius of Leibnitz saw the inevitable effect the movement must have upon the old society; and, in his memorable prophecy of the Revolution at hand (1704), he warned the chiefs of that society to prepare for the storm. For three generations France seemed to live only in thought. Action descended to the vilest and most petty level which her history had ever reached. From the death of Colbert, in 1683, until the ministry of Turgot, in 1774, France seemed to have lost the race of great statesmen, and to be delivered over to the intriguer and the sycophant. Well may the historian say that in passing from the politicians of the reign of Louis xv. to the thinkers of the same epoch, we seem to be passing from the world of the pigmies to that of the Titans. Into the world of ideas France flung herself with passion and with hope. The wonderful accumulation of scientific discoveries which followed the achievements of Newton reacted powerfully on religious thought, and even on practical policy. Mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, began to assume the outlined proportion of coherent sciences; and some vague sense of their connection and real unity filled the mind of all. Out of the physical sciences there emerged a dim conception of a crowning human science, which it was the grand achievement of the eighteenth century to found. History ceased to be a branch of literature; it began to have practical uses for mankind of to-day; and slowly it was recognised as the momentous life-story of man, the autobiography of the human race. Europe no longer absorbed the interest of cultivated thought. The unity of the planet, the community of all who dwell on it, gave a new colour to the whole range of thought; and as the old dogmas of the supernatural Church began to lose their hold on the mind, the new-born enthusiasm of humanity began to fill all hearts.

The indefatigable genius who was the acknowledged leader in the intellectual attack undoubtedly partook in a measure of all the four elements just mentioned, and his true glory is that, throughout the whole range of his varied work, this enthusiasm of humanity glows constantly aflame and warms his zeal. The almost unexampled versatility and fecundity of Voltaire's mind gave his contemporaries the impression of a far larger genius than the test of time has been able to concede him. His merit has been said to lie in a most extraordinary combination of secondary powers, no one of which was precisely of the highest class. He was neither one of the great poets, or observers, or philosophers, or teachers of men, though he wielded, and for a longer time, the most potent literary power of which history tells. Although of the four main schools into which the eighteenth century movement may be grouped, Voltaire was especially marked out as the leading spirit of the intellectual attack, he did not a little to stimulate the constructive task, both in its philosophical and in its social side. It is from Voltaire's visit to England in 1726 that we must date the opening of the grand movement of '89. The accumulating series of impulses which at last forced on the opening of the States-General at Versailles began with English ideas, English teachers, and English or American traditions.

At the same time (1724–1731) was formed in the Place Vendôme with the aid of Lord Bolingbroke, the confraternity of reformers, to whom he gave the English name of club. This was the first appearance in France of an institution which has played so large a part in the history of Europe, which is destined yet to play an even larger part. The Abbé Alari, the Abbé Saint-Pierre, the Marquis d'Argenson, and their companions in the Club de l'Entresol were already, sixty years before the opening of Revolution, covering the ground of the social ideas of '89, in a vague, timid, and tentative manner, it may be, but withal in a spirit of enthusiastic zeal of the better time they were not destined to see.

Of this group of premature reformers, of these precursors and heralds of '89, none is more illustrious than the Marquis d'Argenson, nor is any book more memorable than his *Reflections on the Government of France* (1739). Here we have the germ of the democratic absolutism which has again and again reasserted its strength in France :

here are the germs of the local administration; here is the first proposal for the symmetrical system of eighty-six departments which since 1790 replaced the ancient provinces with all their anomalies. Here also is the repudiation by an illustrious noble of the privileges of nobility, the condemnation of local restrictions on trade, and the dream of a new France where personal equality should reign, and where the cultivator of the soil should be lord of the land he tilled.

The chief spirit of the social and political destructives was as obviously Rousseau as Voltaire had been the chief spirit of the religious destructives. Our business for the moment is with neither of these schools and with neither of these famous men. As all heterodoxy seemed to be latent in the mordant criticism of Voltaire, so all subsequent political anarchy seems to be concentrated in the morbid passion of Rousseau. But though Rousseau must be regarded as in all essentials a destructive, there are many ways in which he had a share in the constructive movement of '89. In the splendour of his pleading for education, for respecting the dignity of the citizen, in his passion for art, in his pathetic dreams of an ideal simplicity of life, in his spiritual Utopia of a higher and more humane humanity, prophet of anarchy as he was, Rousseau has here and there added a stone to the edifice we are still building to-day.

When we turn to the constructive schools, there we find Diderot supreme in the intellectual world, Turgot in the political; whilst Condorcet is the disciple and complement of both. With the purely philosophical work of any of these three we are not now concerned. Our interest is entirely with the social and political question. And at first sight it may seem that Diderot has no share in any but the philosophical. But this most universal genius had a mind open to all sides of the human problem. His grand task the *Encyclopédie* (and we may remember that the first idea of it came from an English Encyclopædia, which it was proposed to translate), the *Encyclopédie* is largely, and indeed mainly, concerned with economic and social matters. Throughout it runs the potent principle of the unity of man's knowledge, of man's life, and of the whole human race. Diderot does far more than discuss abstract questions of science. He traces out the ramifications of science into the minutest and humblest operations of industry. In the Encyclopædia we have installed for the first time on authority that conception of modern times — the marriage of Science with Industry. Machines, trades, manufactures, implements, tools, processes were each in turn the object of Diderot's enthusiastic study. He and his comrades, men like Turgot, d'Alembert, Condorcet, felt that the true destiny of man was the industrial. They strove to place labour on its right level, to dignify its task, and to glorify its mission. Never had philosophy been greater than when she girt up her robes, penetrated into the workshop, and shed her light upon the patient toil of the handicraftsman. For the first time in modern history thought and science took labour to their arms. Industry received its true honour, and was installed in a new sphere. It was a momentous step in the progress of society as much as in the progress of thought.

Chief of all the political reformers, in many things the noblest type of the men of '89, is the great Turgot; he, who if France could have been spared a revolution, was the one man that could have saved her. After him, Necker, a much inferior man, though with equally good intentions, attempted the same task; and the years from 1774–1781 sufficed to show that reform without revolution was impossible. But the twenty years of noble effort, from the hour when Turgot became intendant of Limoges in 1761 until the fall of Necker's ministry in 1781, contained an almost complete rehearsal, were a prelude and epitome, of the practical reforms which the Revolution accomplished after so much blood and such years of chaos. To give the official career of Turgot would be a summary of the ideas of '89. The suppression of the *corvée*, of the restrictions on industry, on the resources of locomotion, the restoration of agriculture, to reduce the finances to order, to diminish public debt, to establish local municipal life, to reorganise the chaotic administration, to remove the exemptions of the noble and ecclesiastical orders, to suppress the monastic orders, to equalise the taxation, to establish a scientific and uniform code of law, a scientific and uniform scale of weights and measures, to reform the feudal land law, to abolish the feudal gilds and antiquated corporations whose obsolete pretensions crushed industry, to recall the Protestants, to establish entire freedom of conscience, to guarantee complete liberty of thought; lastly, to establish a truly national system of education — such were the plans of Turgot which for two short years he struggled to accomplish with heroic tenacity and elevation of spirit. Those two years, from 1774–1776, are at once the brightest and the saddest in the modern history of France. For almost the first time, and certainly for the last time, a great philosopher, who was also a great statesman, the last French statesman of the old order, held for a moment almost absolute power. It was a gigantic task, and a giant was called in to accomplish it. But against folly even the gods contend in vain. And before folly, combined with insatiable selfishness, lust, greed, and arrogance, the heroic Turgot fell. They refused him his bloodless, orderly, scientific Revolution; and the bloody, stormy, spasmodic Revolution began.

To recall Turgot is to recall Condorcet, the equal of Turgot as thinker, if inferior to Turgot as statesman. Around the mind and nature of Condorcet there lingers the halo of a special grace. Sprung from an old baronial family with bigoted prejudices of feudal right, the young noble, from his youth, broke through the opposition of his order to devote himself to a life of thought. Spotless in his life, calm, reserved, warm hearted and tender, 'the volcano covered with snow' that flamed in his breast, had never betrayed him to an outburst of jealousy, vanity, ill-humour, or extravagance. The courtly and polished aristocrat, without affectation and without hysterics, bore himself as one of the simplest of the people. The privileges of the old system, which were his birthright, filled him with a sense of unmixed abhorrence. His scepticism, vehement as it was, did not spring from intellectual pride or from turbulent vanity. He disbelieves in orthodoxy out of genuine thirst for truth, and denounces superstition out of no alloy of feeling save that of burning indignation at its evil works. The *Life of Turgot* by Condorcet, 1787, might serve indeed as prologue to the memorable drama which opens in 1789. It was most fitting that the mighty movement should be heralded by the tale of the greatest statesman of the age of Louis XVI., told by one of its chief thinkers. And the fine lines of Lucan, which Condorcet placed as a motto on the title-page of his *Life of Turgot*, may serve as the device, not of Turgot alone, but of Condorcet himself, and indeed of the higher spirits of '89 together —

'Secta fuit servare modum, finemque tenere,
Naturamque sequi, patriæque impendere vitam;
Nec sibi, sed toti genitum se credere mundo.'

'The only party they acknowledged was the rule of good sense, and to keep firm to their purpose, to submit to the teaching of Nature's law, and to offer up their lives for their country—holding that man is born not for himself, but for humanity in the sum.' He who would understand what men mean by 'the ideas of '89' should mark, learn, and inwardly digest those two small books of Condorcet, the *Life of Turgot*, 1787, and the *Historical Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind*, 1795.

The annals of literature have no more pathetic incident than the history of this little book — this still unfinished vision of a brain prematurely cut off. In the midst of the struggle between Mountain and Gironde, Condorcet, who stood between both and who belonged to neither, he who had the enthusiasm of the Mountain without its ferocity, the virtues and culture of the Girondists without their pedantic formalism, was denounced and condemned to death, and dragged out a few weeks of life in a miserable concealment. There, with death hanging round him, he calmly compiled the first true sketch of human evolution. Amidst the chaos and bloodshed he reviews the history of mankind. Not a word of pain, doubt, bitterness, or reproach is wrung from him. He sees nothing but visions of a happy and glorious future for the race, when war shall cease, and the barriers shall fall down between man and man, class and class, race and race, when man shall pursue a regenerate life in human brotherhood and confidence in truth. Industry there shall be the common lot, and the noblest privilege. But it shall be brightened to all by a common education, free, rational, and comprehensive, with a lightening of the burdens of labour by scientific appliances of life and increased opportunity for culture. 'Our hopes,' he writes, in that last lyric chapter of the little sketch, 'our hopes as to the future of the human race may be summed up in these three points: the raising of all nations to a common level; the progress towards equality in each separate people; and, lastly, the practical amelioration of the lot of man.' 'It is in the contemplation of such a future,' he concludes, 'that the philosopher may find a safe asylum in all troubles, and may live in that true paradise, to which his reason may look forward with confidence, and which his sympathy with humanity may invest with a rapture of the purest kind.'

The ink of these pages was hardly dry when the writer by death escaped the guillotine to which republicans condemned him in the name of liberty. How many of us can repeat a hundred anecdotes of the guillotine, of its victims, and its professors, yet how few of us have seriously taken to heart the *Sketch of Human Progress!* The blood is dried up, but the book lives, and human progress continues on the lines there so prophetically traced. 'I have studied history long,' says de Tocqueville, 'yet I have never read of any revolution wherein there may be found men of patriotism so sincere, of such true devotion of self, of more entire grandeur of spirit.'

CHAPTER VII.

FRANCE IN 1789 AND 1889.[1]

The year of centenaries has brought us no memento more significant than the timely reissue of Arthur Young's *Travels in France* in 1787–89.[2] Europe has seen in this century nothing more striking, and hardly any single thing more entirely blessed, than the transfiguration of rural France from its state under the ancient monarchy to its state under the new republic. By good luck an English traveller, with rare opportunities and almost a touch of genius, traversed every province just on the eve of the great crisis, and left to mankind a vivid picture of all he saw. 'Vehement, plain-spoken Arthur Young,' says Carlyle, who, in his lurid chapter on the 'General Overturn,' has made household words out of several of Arthur's historic sayings. 'That wise and honest traveller,' says John Morley, perhaps, with rather excessive praise, 'with his luminous criticism of the most important side of the Revolution, worth a hundred times more than Burke, Paine, and Mackintosh all put together.'

And now a lady who has seen more of France than even Arthur Young, Miss Betham-Edwards, has given us an excellent edition of the famous *Travels*, so long practically inaccessible, with notes, illustrations, references, and a vignette picture of rural France in 1889 such as old Arthur himself might have limned, had he returned to earth and to France to see the great Exhibition. The contrast, as we look first on this picture and then on that, is the transition we find in a dream or a fairy tale. It is as though one rose from the dead. We see the sombre, haggard, crushed French peasant of Languedoc, Poitou, or Franche Comté, that Lazarus whom the old system swathed in cerecloth and entombed, starting forth into life from his bonds, and returning to his home, to activity, and to freedom. It is the Revolution that has worked this miracle. This is the only work of the Revolution that is wholly blessed. Here, at any rate, it has destroyed almost nothing that was good, and has founded little that is evil. 'The Revolution,' says the editor of these *Travels*, 'in a few years metamorphosed entire regions.'

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[1] The *Forum*, New York, vol. ix. March 1890.

[2] *Travels in France*, by Arthur Young, during the years 1787, 1788, 1789, with an Introduction, Biographical Sketch, and Notes, by M. Betham-Edwards. London: G. Bell and Sons, 1889. Bohn's Standard Library, N.S.; also *France of To-day*, a survey comparative and retrospective, by M. Betham-Edwards. London: Rivingtons. 2 vols. 1892–94.

What life, what heart, what ring there was in the racy sayings of the fine old boy! Every one knows that sharp word wrung from him even while he was the guest of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld: 'Whenever you stumble on a *grand seigneur*, you are sure to find his property a desert.' The signs of the greatness of a *grand seigneur* are 'wastes, deserts, fern, ling.' 'Oh! if I was the legislator of France for a day, I would make such great lords skip again.' 'The crop of this country is princes of the blood; that is to say, hares, pheasants, deer, boars.' Schoolboys in France can repeat the historic passage about the woman near Mars-la-Tour, aged twenty-eight, but so bent and furrowed and hardened by labour that she looked sixty or seventy, as she groaned out: 'Sir, the taxes and the dues are crushing us to death!' No one, says he, can imagine what the French peasant woman has come to look under grinding poverty. He tells of 'some things that called themselves women, but in reality were walking dunghills'; 'girls and women without shoes or stockings.' 'The ploughmen at their work have neither *sabots,* nor feet to their stockings. This is a poverty that strikes at the root of national prosperity.' And then comes that scathing phrase which rings in the ears of Englishmen to-day: 'It reminds me of the misery of Ireland.'

The poor people's habitations he finds in Brittany to be 'miserable heaps of dirt.' There, as so often elsewhere in France, no glass window, scarcely any light; the women furrowed without age by labour. 'One-third of what I have seen of this province seems uncultivated, and nearly all of it in misery.' 'Nothing but privileges and poverty.' And every one remembers what these privileges were — 'these tortures of the peasantry' he calls them — of which in one sentence he enumerates twenty-eight.

And now, in 1889, turn to these same provinces, to the third generation in descent from these very peasants. 'The desert that saddened Arthur Young's eyes,' writes Miss Betham-Edwards to-day, 'may now be described as a land of Goshen, overflowing with milk and honey.' 'The land was well stocked and cultivated, the people were neatly and appropriately dressed, and the signs of general contentment and well-being delightful to contemplate.' In one province, a million acres of waste land have been brought into cultivation. In five or six years, wrote the historian Mignet, 'the Revolution quadrupled the resources of civilisation.' Where Arthur Young saw the miserable peasant woman, Miss Betham-Edwards tells us that to-day the farmers' daughters have for portions 'several thousand pounds.' What Arthur Young calls an 'unimproved, poor, and ugly country,' Miss Betham-Edwards now finds to be 'one vast garden.' In the *landes,* where the traveller saw nearly a hundred miles of continuous waste, 700,000 acres have been fertilised by canals, and a very small portion remains in the state in which he found it. 'Maine and Anjou have the appearance of deserts,' writes the traveller of 1789. 'Sunny, light-hearted, dance-loving Anjou' appears to the traveller of 1889 a model of prosperity and happiness. Where he found the peasants living in caves underground, she finds neat homesteads costing more than 6000 francs to build. In Dauphiné, where he finds, in 1789, mountains waste or in a great measure useless, she finds, in 1889, choice vineyards that sell at 25,000 francs per acre.

And what has done all this? The prophetic soul of Arthur Young can tell us, though a hundred years were needed to make his hopes a reality. His words have passed into a household phrase where the English tongue reaches: 'The magic of property turns sand to gold.' 'The inhabitants of this village deserve encouragement for their industry,' he writes of Sauve, 'and if I was a French minister they should have it. They would soon turn all the deserts around them into gardens.' 'Give a man,' he adds, in a phrase which is now a proverb, 'the secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden; give him a nine years' lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert.' What has made all this misery? he cries again and again; what has blighted this magnificent country, and crushed this noble people? Misgovernment, bad laws, cruel customs, wanton selfishness of the rich, the powerful, and the privileged. Nothing was ever said more true. Arthur Young's good legislator came even sooner than he dared to hope, armed with a force more tremendous than he could conceive. It was a minister greater than any Turgot, or Necker, or Mirabeau; who served a sovereign more powerful than Louis or

Napoleon. His sovereign was the Revolution; the minister was the new system. And the warm-hearted English gentleman lived to see his 'great lords skip again' somewhat too painfully. The storm has passed, the blood is washed out; but the 'red fool-fury of the Seine' has made rural France the paradise of the peasant.

Let us take a typical bit of the country here and there and compare its state in 1789 and in 1889. From Paris and Orleans Arthur Young, in 1787, journeyed southward through Berri and the Limousin to Toulouse. His diary is one cry of pity. 'The fields are scenes of pitiable management, as the houses are of misery.' 'Heaven grant me patience while I see a country thus neglected, and forgive me the oaths I swear at the absence and ignorance of the possessors.' 'The husbandry poor and the people miserable.' 'The poor people who cultivate the soil here are *métayers*, that is, men who hire the soil without ability to stock it — a miserable system that perpetuates poverty and excludes instruction.'

Turn to our traveller of 1889. Berri, says Miss Betham-Edwards, has been transformed under a sound land system. It has indeed a poor soil; but, even in the '*triste Sologne*,' plantations, irrigation canals, and improved methods of agriculture are transforming this region. So rapid is the progress that George Sand, who died but the other day, would hardly recognise the country she has described so well. Here and there may be seen, now used as an outhouse, one of those bare, windowless cabins which shocked Arthur Young, and close at hand the 'neat, airy, solid dwellings' the peasant owners have built for themselves. Here Miss Betham-Edwards visited newly-made farms, with their spick-and-span buildings, the whole having the appearance of a little settlement in the Far West. The holdings vary from 6 to 30 acres, their owners possessing a capital of 5000 to 8000 and even 25,000 francs, the land well stocked and cultivated, the people well dressed, and signs of general content and well-being delightful to contemplate. And as to *métayage*, 'that miserable system which perpetuates poverty,' Miss Betham-Edwards finds it now one of the chief factors of the agricultural progress of France, creating cordial relations between landlord and tenant. The secret of this curious conflict between two most competent observers is this: *métayage* — the system under which the owner of the soil finds land, stock, and implements, the tiller of the farm finds manual labour, and all produce is equally shared — depends for its fair working upon just laws, equality before the law, absence of any privilege in the owner, and good understanding as between men who alike respect each other. With these, it is an excellent system of farming, very favourable to the labourer; without these, it may almost reduce him to serfdom. It may thus be one of the best, or one of the worst, of all systems of husbandry. As Arthur Young saw it under the ancient system of privileged orders, it was almost as bad as an Irish tenancy at will. Under the new system of post-revolutionary equality, it has given prosperity to large tracts in France.

From Autun in Burgundy, Arthur Young travelled across the Bourbonnais and the Nivernais, and he found the country 'villainously cultivated'; when he sees such a country 'in the hands of starving *métayers*, instead of fat farmers,' he knows not how to pity the *seigneurs*. To-day, his editor finds 'fat farmers' innumerable, for *métayage* has greatly advanced the condition of the peasants. The country that lies between the mouths of the Garonne and the Loire is precisely that part of his journey which wrings from Arthur Young his furious invective against the great lords whom he wished he could make 'to skip again.' Now, the Gironde, the Charente, and La Vendée are thriving, rich districts, intersected with railways; 'and, owing to the indefatigable labours of peasant owners, hundreds of thousands of acres of waste land have been put under cultivation.'

Or turn to Brittany, which Arthur Young calls 'a miserable province'; 'husbandry not much further advanced than among the Hurons'; 'the people almost as wild as their country'; 'mud houses, no windows'; 'a hideous heap of wretchedness'—all through 'the execrable maxims of despotism, or the equally detestable prejudices of a feudal nobility.' And this is the rich, thriving, laborious, and delightful Brittany which our tourists love, where Miss Betham-Edwards tells us of scientific farming, artificial manures, machinery, 'the granary of Western France,' market gardens, of fabulous value, and a great agricultural college, one of the most important in Europe.

Maine and Anjou, through which the Loire flows below Tours, were deserts to Arthur Young. Every tourist knows that these provinces now look as rich and prosperous as any spot in Europe. Miss Betham-Edwards gives us an almost idyllic picture of an Angevin farm-house, with its supper, merriment, and dance; and tells of Angevin peasants building themselves villas with eight rooms, a flower garden, parlour, kitchen, offices, and four airy bedrooms. 'The peasant wastes nothing and spends little; he possesses stores of homespun linen, home-made remedies, oil, vinegar, honey, cider, and wine of his own producing.' 'The poorest eat asparagus, green peas, and strawberries every day in season; and as everybody owns crops, nobody pilfers his neighbours'.' Universal ownership gives absolute security to property, and pauperism is unknown.

As in Berri, as in the Limousin, Poitou, Anjou, and

Brittany, so elsewhere throughout France, we find the same astounding contrast between the tale told by the traveller of 1789 and the traveller of 1889. Paris amazes Arthur Young by its dirtiness and discomfort, and the silence and stagnation of life the instant he passes out of its narrow crooked streets! To those accustomed to the animation and rapid movement of England, says he, it is not possible to describe 'the dulness and stupidity of France!' To read these words in the year of the great Exhibition, 1889, with its 26,000,000 tickets bought by sight-seers! In Champagne he pronounces his famous diatribe against government. Now, we all know Champagne to be a thriving and wealthy country. It was in Franche Comté that Arthur Young, being surrounded by an angry crowd, made his famous speech to them about French and English taxation, and explained the difference between a *seigneur* in France and in England. On which side would the difference lie, if he rose to make his speech in the Doubs to-day? Arthur Young crosses France from Alsace to Auvergne before he sees a field of clover; but in France to-day clover is as common as it is in England. Old Marseilles he thinks close, ill-built, and dirty; and 'the port itself is a horse pond.' He cannot find a conveyance between Marseilles and Nice. Such great cities in France, he says, have not the hundredth part of the means of communication common in much smaller places in England. He passes into the mountain region of Upper Savoy; and there he finds the people at their ease, and the land productive, in spite of the harsh climate and the barren soil. He asks the reason, and he learns that there are no *seigneurs* in Upper Savoy. In Lower Savoy he finds the people poor and miserable, for there stands a *carcan*, a seigneurial standard, with a chain and a heavy collar, an emblem of the slavery of the people.

At Lyons he meets the Rolands, though he failed to recognise the romantic genius that lay still hidden in the young and beautiful wife of the austere financier. At Lyons he is assured that 'the state of manufacture is melancholy to the last degree.' And, as the quarter now known as Perrache did not yet exist, he finds the city itself badly situated. As he passes along the Riviera from Antibes to Nice, he is driven to walk, for want of a conveyance, and a woman carries his baggage on an ass. At Cannes there is no post-house, carriage, horses, or mules, and he has to walk through nine miles of waste! And so he at last gets back to Paris. There he hears Mirabeau thunder in the National Assembly; meets the King and Queen, La Fayette, Barnave, Sieyès, Condorcet, and the chiefs of the Revolution; and is taken to the Jacobin Club, of which he is duly installed as a member. And this wonderful book ends with a chapter of general reflections on the Revolution, which go more deeply down to the root of the matter, John Morley has said, than all that Burke, Paine, and Mackintosh piled up in so many eloquent periods.

The Revolution as a whole would carry us far afield. In these few pages we are dealing with the great transformation that it wrought in the condition of the peasant. It must not be forgotten that part of the wonderful difference between the peasant of the last century and the peasant of to-day, is due to the vast material advancement common to the civilised world. Railroads, steam factories, telegraphs, the enormous increase in population, in manufactures, commerce, and inventions were not products of the 'principles of '89,' nor of the Convention, nor of the Jacobin Club. All Europe has grown, America has grown almost miraculously, and France has grown with both. But the political lesson of Arthur Young's journey is this:

the poverty and the desolation which he saw in 1789 were directly due, as he so keenly felt, not to the country, not to the husbandmen, not to ignorance or to indolence in the people, not to mere neglect, weakness, or stupidity in the central government, but directly to bad laws, cruel privileges, and an oppressive system of tyranny. Arthur Young found an uncommonly rich soil, a glorious climate, a thrifty, ingenious, and laborious people, a strong central government that, in places and at times, could make magnificent roads, bridges, canals, ports; and when a Turgot, or a Liancourt, or a de Turbilly had a free hand, a country which could be made one of the richest on the earth. What Arthur Young saw, with the eye of true insight, was, that so soon as these evil laws and this atrocious system of land tenure were removed, France would be one of the finest countries in the world. And Arthur Young, as we see, was right.

Another point is this: to Arthur Young, the Suffolk farmer of 1789, everything he sees in the peasantry and husbandry of France appears miserably inferior to the peasantry and husbandry of England. France is a country far worse cultivated than England, its agricultural produce miserably less; its life, animation, and means of communication ludicrously inferior to those of England; its farmers in penury, its labourers starving, its resources barbarous, compared with those of England. In an English village more meat, he learns, is eaten in a week, than in a French village in a year; the clothing, food, home, and intelligence of the English labourer are far above those of the French labourer. The country inns are infinitely better in England; there is ten times the circulation, the wealth, the comfort in an English rural district; the English labourer is a free man, the French labourer little more than a serf.

Can we say the same thing of 1889? Obviously not. The contrast to-day is reversed. It is the English labourer who is worse housed, worse fed, clothed, taught; who has nothing of his own, who can never save; to whom the purchase of an acre of land is as much an impossibility as of a diamond necklace, and who may no more think to own a dairy than to own a race horse; who follows the plough for two shillings a day, and ends, when he drops, in the workhouse. England has increased in these hundred years far more than France in population, in wealth, in commerce, in manufactures, in dominion, in resources, in general material prosperity — in all but in the condition of her rural labourer. In that she has gone back, perhaps positively; but relatively it is certain she has gone very far back. The English traveller in France to-day is amazed at the wealth, independence, and comfort of the French peasant. To Miss Betham-Edwards, who knows France well, it is a land of Goshen, flowing with milk and honey; the life of the peasant of Anjou, Brie, and La Vendée is one of idyllic prosperity 'delightful to behold.' The land tenure of England in 1789 was, as Young told the mob in the Doubs, far in advance of that of France — as far as that of France of 1889 is in advance of that of England now. Our English great lords have not yet begun 'to skip again.' Land tenure in England to-day is essentially the same as it was in 1789. In France it has been wholly transformed by the Revolution.

There are in France now some eight million persons who own the soil, the great mass of whom are peasants. It is well known that the Revolution did not create this peasant land-ownership, but that in part it goes back to the earliest times of French history. Turgot, Necker, de Tocqueville, and a succession of historians have abundantly proved the fact. Arthur Young entirely recognises the truth, and tells us that one-third of the soil of France was already the property of the peasant. This estimate has been adopted by good French authorities; but Miss Betham-Edwards considers it an over-statement, and holds that the true proportion in 1789 was one-fourth. In any case it is now much more than one-half. Not but that there is now in France a very great number also of large estates, and some that are immense when compared with the standard of England proper. It has indeed been estimated that positively, though not relatively, there are more great rural estates in France to-day than there are in England. The notion that the Revolution has extinguished great properties in France, is as utterly mistaken as the notion that the Revolution created the system of small properties. The important point is that since the Revolution every labourer has been able to acquire a portion of the soil; and a very large proportion of the adult population has already so done.

It is also likely that Young overrated the depth of the external discomfort that he saw. Under such a brutal system of fiscal and manorial oppression as was then rife, the farmer and the labourer carefully hide what wealth they may have, and deliberately assume the outer semblance of want, for fear of the tax-gatherer, the tithe proctor, and the landlord's bailiff. That has been seen in Ireland for centuries and may be still seen to-day. So the French peasant was not always so poor as he chose to appear in Arthur Young's eyes.

Another thing is that the French labouring man, and still more the labouring woman, is a marvellously penurious, patient, frugal creature who deliberately, for the sake of thrift, endures hard fare, uncleanness, squalor, such as no English or American freeman would stomach except by necessity. The life led by a comfortable English or American farmer would represent wicked waste and shameful indulgence to a much richer French peasant. I myself know a labourer on wages of less than twenty shillings a week, who by thrift has bought ten acres of the magnificent garden land between Fontainebleau and the Seine, worth many thousand pounds, on which grow all kinds of fruits and vegetables, and the famous dessert grapes; yet who, with all his wealth and abundance, denies himself and his two children meat on Sundays, and even a drink of the wine which he grows and makes for the market. I know a peasant family in Normandy, worth in houses, gardens, and farms, at least 500,000 francs, who will live on the orts cast out as refuse by their own lodgers, while the wife and mother hires herself out as a scullion for two francs a day. The penuriousness of the French peasant is to English eyes a thing savage, bestial, and maniacal.

The French peasant has great virtues; but he has the defects of his virtues, and his home life is far from idyllic. He is laborious, shrewd, enduring, frugal, self-reliant, sober, honest, and capable of intense self-control for a distant reward; but that reward is property in land, in pursuit of which he may become as pitiless as a bloodhound. He is not chaste (indeed he is often lecherous), but he relentlessly keeps down the population, and can hardly bring himself to rear two children. To give these two children a good heritage, he will inflict great hardships on them and on all others whom he controls. He has an intense passion for his own immediate locality; but he loves his own commune, and still more his own *terre*, almost as much as France. He is not indeed the monster that Zola paints in *La Terre;* but there is a certain vein of Zolaism in him, and the type may be found in the criminal records of France. He is intelligent; but he is not nearly so well educated as the Swiss, or the German, or the Hollander.

He is able to bear suffering without a murmur; but he has none of that imperturbable courage that Englishmen and Americans show in a thousand new situations. He is shrewd and far-seeing, and a tough hand in a bargain; but he has none of the inventive audacity of the American citizen. He is self-reliant, but too cautious to trust himself in a new field. He is independent, but without the proud dignity of the Spanish peasant. He has a love for the gay, the beautiful, and the graceful, which, compared with that of the Englishman, is the sense of art; though he has nothing of the charm of the Italian, or of the musical genius of the German.

Take him for all in all, he is a strong and noteworthy force in modern civilisation. Though his country has not the vast mineral wealth of England, nor her gigantic development in manufactures and in commerce, he has made France one of the richest, most solid, most progressive countries on earth. He is quite as frugal and patient as the German, and is far more ingenious and skilful. He has not the energy of the Englishman, or the elastic spring of the American, but he is far more saving and much more provident. He 'wastes nothing, and spends little'; and thus, since his country comes next to England and America in natural resources and national energy, he has built up one of the strongest, most self-contained, and most durable of modern peoples.

Since this essay appeared in 1890, Miss Betham-Edwards has published her own most valuable and interesting survey, her *France of To-day*, 2 vols., 1892–94. This book is the result of her exhaustive study of French agriculture, over twenty-five years. It forms the pendant to Arthur Young, and as being a study exactly one hundred years later, over the same ground and embodying an even more extensive knowledge of France than that of the old traveller, it becomes a work of rare value to the student of history and of politics. Miss Betham-Edwards is also the well-known author of several other books of travel in France; and her readers rejoice to learn that her life-long labours have received most honourable recognition from the Government of France as well as that of England.

Fluctuat nec mergitur should be the motto not of Paris but of France. The indomitable endurance of her race has enabled her to surmount crushing disasters, losses, and disappointments under which another race would have sunk. She bears with ease a national debt the annual charge of which is more than double that of wealthy England, and a taxation nearly double that of England, with almost the same population — a permanent taxation (exceeding 100 francs per head) greater than has ever before been borne by any people. She loses over one war, a sum not much short of the whole national debt of England, and she writes off, without a murmur, a loss of 1,200,000,000 francs, thrown into the Panama Canal. If France is thus strong, the backbone of her strength is found in the marvellous industry and thrift of her peasantry. And if her peasantry are industrious and thrifty, it is because the Revolution of '89 has secured to them a position more free and independent than that presented by any monarchical country on the continent of Europe.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CITY: ANCIENT — MEDIÆVAL — MODERN — IDEAL.

THE life that men live in the *City* gives the type and measure of their civilisation. The word *civilisation* means the manner of life of the civilised part of the community: *i.e.* of the city-men, not of the country-men, who are called *rustics,* and once were called *pagans,* or the heathens of the villages. Hence, inasmuch as a city is a highly organised and concentrated type of the general life of an epoch or people, if we compare the various types of the city, we are able to measure the strength and weakness of different kinds of civilisation.

How enormous is the range over which city-life extends, from the first cave-men and dug-out wigwams in prehistoric ages to the complex arrangements and appliances of modern Paris (which we may take as the type of the highly organised modern city of Europe). How vast is the interval between one kind of town-life and another kind! — say comparing Bagdad with Chicago, or Naples with Staleybridge. The differences in the humblest forms of rural life are far less apparent, whether we deal with different epochs or different races. The ploughman and the shepherd to-day on the Cotswolds, or the Cheviots, certainly the tenants of mud-cabins in Connemara or Skye, do not, in external modes of material life, differ so greatly from their predecessors in the days of the Crusades or even of the Heptarchy; and a herdsman of Anatolia, of La Mancha, or of Kerry, eats, sleeps, and works in very similar ways. But how vast is the interval between the habits and conditions of the Londoners who built the Lake-village of Llyn-dyn, or the Parisii who staked out the island of Loukhteith, and the modern Londoner and the modern Parisian!

The change began with the landing on the Thames, or the Seine, of a few thousand men in armour from the Tiber, led by the greatest genius known to history, who introduced the language, law, institutions, and discipline of the greatest City recorded in history. In old times some of the most famous cities in the world were not so large as one London parish, and not nearly so populous. Entire states, which for centuries filled the page of the main history of mankind, did not cover so much ground, or contain so many inhabitants, as do London and Paris to-day. The men of Athens, who passed their lives in the midst of the noblest creations of art, at the broken fragments of which we gaze in wonder and awe, men who heard the most sublime tragedies, and took part in the most imposing ceremonies ever devised by man, had food, garments, and lodging so rough and plain that we should hardly think it fit for a prison. On the other hand, they had as much leisure, were as daintily fastidious in their tastes, and regarded themselves as much lords of creation, as if they were all officers in the Guards.

In the Middle Ages, the men who passed their lives in these gorgeous cathedrals, of which we only see the colourless shell to-day, and in that fantastic and chivalrous art-life, of which we only catch glimpses in some old corner of Verona, Nuremberg, or Florence, lived in streets and houses so fetid, cramped, poisonous, and gloomy, under conditions so dangerous to life and limb, so full of discomfort, that many a prisoner would prefer his warm cell in Pentonville. And we, who have railways, telephones, and newspapers, who make everything by machinery, except beauty and happiness — we who cannot drink a glass of water, or teach children to read and write without an army of inspectors, Acts of Parliament, and amateur Professors of Social Science, to show us how to do it — we who, in a man's lifetime, cover with new bricks a whole province, in area bigger than the Attica of Pericles, or the Roman State of Coriolanus : — we lead, in some of our huge manufacturing cities, lives so dull and mechanical that Pericles or Coriolanus would have preferred exile.

Out of a vast range of cities, old and new, it would be instructive to compare four types : the Ancient city of Greece and Italy — the Mediæval city of Catholic and Feudal times — the Modern city of England, France, and America — and then the Ideal city, as we can conceive it to be, in the future. Each age has its strong side, and its weak side. It would be impossible to bring back any obsolete type of society : but things may be learned from some of them. And, where we have horrible evils of our own to conquer, it may be just as well to reflect on a very different type of life, under other conceptions of nature and of man.

I. *The Ancient City.*

Let us imagine ourselves citizens of some famous city of Greece or Italy in the earlier ages before the Roman empire — such a city as Athens, Corinth, Syracuse, or Rome some centuries before Christ. Our city would be at once our Country, our Church, our Religion — our school, academy, and university, — our museum, our trade-gild, our play-ground, and our club. The city would have been founded by some god or demi-god, with mysterious and half-uttered legends about its origin ; and the knowledge of these was thought to be confined to a select few, who were quite unable or unwilling to divulge it, legends preserved by quaint rites and traditional ceremonials that all reverenced and none could explain. The city would be, not only the special creation but the favourite home of some great god; it would be also the chosen abode of a company of minor gods and heroes whose images, altars, sanctuaries, groves, fountains, caves, or rocks, would lie thickly around and be chiefly grouped about the citadel. There would be the olive that sprang from the ground at the stroke of Athene's spear, the water of some nymph, the oracular cave of some prophet, the eternal fire, the stone that fell from heaven, the lair of the sacred serpent, the rude bronze or oaken fetish, and all the mysteries of the Holy of Holies in the upper or inner city.

The citizen was born to the privilege of these gods: his city and its worship and rites formed an inalienable religion which no man could acquire, no man could put off. A man could not change his city, except under rare and difficult conditions; if he left this city he became an outcast and an outlaw, a man without legal rights or religious privileges, unless so far as he was protected or adopted by some new household or gild. To be banished from one's city was a sort of civil death; moral and spiritual degradation, with some of the effects of excommunication and outlawry at once. If a man came to a city not his own for pleasure or business, he remained a sojourner and a foreigner, without the rights of citizenship, in a state between a citizen and a slave; and his condition was less pleasant and secure than is that of a Chinese coolie in California or Victoria.

To the free-born citizen, his City was his Church and his Country, his home and his society. The worship of the gods consisted in a constant succession of public ceremonies which combined artistic display with civic festival. To all of these the citizen was free, and no business or work was allowed to interfere with the social and religious duty of attending what was at once divine service and patriotic function. The southern climate usually enabled him to enjoy all these in the open air or under a covered portico — pictures, statues, processions, lectures, hymns, sacrifices, musical celebrations, were all to be found in public places or open colonnades. The piety and public spirit of the opulent noble filled each market-place or street corner with a work of art, a shrine, a statue, a fountain or a portico. There were no museums, because the city, its temples, and forum were a continuous museum, open at all times and without fee or ticket. The theatres were in buildings hollowed out of the rock or open to the sky, and were practically free of charge. Exhibitions of skill, dancing, the singing in chorus of hymns, processions on horse and foot, chariot races and horse races, even combats with beasts and pantomimes were, in origin and in theory, religious ceremonies, and as such were open and gratuitous in practice.

It was a civic obligation of the rich and well-born to offer these artistic displays and these means of religious worship to their fellow-citizens; and it was part of the inheritance they derived from their ancestors and their ancestral deities. These leitourgies were the tribute that the rich paid to the state and to the patron gods of their family and the shades of their forefathers. That which began as a sacred duty to family and to the Powers above and below gradually became a sort of public tax or civic obligation to their countrymen. They were expected to provide plays, festivals, illuminations, races, concerts, fountains, baths, temples, and works of art. At Rome they pleaded the causes of their clients in the law-courts, protected them in difficulty, and ultimately supported them in need, they threw open their gardens, and often they bequeathed their mansions, gardens, estates, and wealth to the city as their heirs. The wealthy and the ambitious were expected to take the lead in peace and in war, in matters sacred or profane, in art and in law. On the great festivals and civic gatherings they were called on to make what are called in the States public 'orations' in honour of the city, its sons, and its deities. Public men in Europe, like 'prominent citizens' in America, are also accustomed to make 'orations'; and Lord Rosebery or Mr. Balfour can hardly play a game or eat a dinner without being called on for a few words. But at Athens or at Rome, it was a more serious and perhaps a more artistic performance than our after-dinner witticisms. And those who stood in the forum and listened to Pericles and to Demosthenes, to Scipio and to Cicero, took home more material for thought and a higher standard of public debate than what we usually carry away with us from a crowded town's-meeting.

Men did not make speeches in public meetings in order 'to get into Parliament': because every adult citizen was himself a member of Parliament, or at least a legislator. At set times, the citizens were gathered in the agora or forum round the *bema* or *rostrum*, listened to those who addressed them, and then and there voted decrees and made laws. In many Greek cities any citizen had a right to stand up and propose a decree or a law or amendment; and if he could persuade his fellow-citizens, or such of them as chose to attend the meeting, his proposition was at once carried out. A citizen's trade or profession, if he had one, was practically determined by custom; and, as a rule, it could not be exercised freely in any other way or in other place. The public places, gardens, temples, colonnades, and monuments were perpetually thronged with citizens who knew each other by sight and name, who spent their lives in a sort of open-air club, talking politics, art, business, or scandal — criticised Aristophanes' last comic opera and Cicero's furious attack on Clodius. And in the cool of the day they gathered to see the young lads wrestle, race, leap, and box, cast the javelin or the stone; and the younger warriors practised feats with their horses or with the spear and the shield.

Of course such a city was of moderate size. No city in Greece proper exceeded in size such cities as Edinburgh or York; and most of them were of smaller area than Lincoln and Oxford. Even Rome, Syracuse, and Alexandria, the largest cities of the ancient world, were not so vast but what one could walk round their outer walls in a summer afternoon. In Greece and Italy, every considerable city was beautiful and set in a beautiful site — with a central citadel crowned with porticoes, colonnades, and temples; and in some cities, such as Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Byzantium, Sparta, Corcyra, Naples, Ancona, Rome, with a panorama of varied splendour. Within the walls there would be ample space for gardens, groves, parks, and exercise grounds; and on issuing from the walls without, the open country at once presented itself, where game could be chased or the mountain-side could be roamed. There were no leagues of dull and grimy suburbs, no acres of factories and smoky furnaces, fetid streams, and squalid wastes; there was no drunkenness in the streets, and practically no rates and taxes and no poor-houses.

Health was a matter of religion, and it was vastly promoted by this, that cleanliness and sanitary discipline was a religious duty as well as an affair of personal pride. It remained a religious duty and a poetic sentiment after definite belief in local gods had become a mere convention or a phrase. To defile the precincts of the city, and almost every open corner of it was consecrated to some deity or hero, was to outrage the powers of heaven or of earth; to cast refuse or sewage into a stream was to incur the wrath of some river-god; to pollute one of the city fountains was to offer sacrilege to some water-nymph. To bring disease into some public gathering was to insult the gods and demi-gods; to place the dead within the precincts of a temple, or to bury the dead within the city, or in contact with human habitations, to leave the dead or any human remains unburied or scattered about in public places and abandoned as carrion, would have seemed to a Greek or a Roman the last enormity of blasphemous horror.

To wash, to shampoo the skin daily, to trim and anoint the hair, to scour the clothes (and the Roman *toga* was made of white wool which needed endless scouring), to brush, paint, and limewash the walls and floors, to cleanse the public thoroughfares, to get rid of every form of uncleanness and refuse — this was a religious, social, domestic, and personal duty: to effect which were concentrated almost all the impulses that we know as obedience to the Deity, social decency, family pride, and the being a gentleman and a lady. A Greek who should have submitted to live in the bestial uncleanness, the fetid atmosphere, and the polluted water supply to which we condemn such masses of the labouring people of our vast cities, would have felt himself a rebel against the gods above, and an outcast from the fellowship of decent citizens. The Greek word for 'gentleman' is *καλοκἀγαθός*, which literally means the 'beautiful and the good,' and which, perhaps, came to mean in practice the clean and 'the nice,' as we say, *gens comme il faut*, as the French say, 'the well-washed' and 'the respectable.' No Greek could think himself 'respectable' or 'nice,' unless he were constantly scouring, scraping, washing, polishing, and anointing his person, his clothes, his house, and his utensils. And the women were almost as active as the men in the daily use of the bath.

The habit of constant discussion and witnessing shows grew on the Greeks, as the habit of bathing grew on the Romans, until these things became a mania to which their lives were given up. Whole rivers were brought down from the mountains in aqueducts, and ultimately in the Roman empire the city population spent a large part of their day in the public baths — buildings as big as St. Paul's Cathedral and of magnificent materials and adornment — where 5000 persons could meet and take their air-bath in what was club, play-ground, theatre, lecture-hall, and promenade at once. Such was the classical religion of cleanliness, of which the Musulman has inherited some traditions, and of which Europe in our own generation is beginning to revive the practice. The excess of this skin deep purification of the body led to a melancholy reaction, when Christianity denounced it as sinful, and reconsecrated Dirt, the natural state of primitive man; until at last in the ages of faith we had uncleanness of the body regarded as the purity of the soul, and a man was exalted to be saint when he was found to have made himself a mass of vermin.

The obverse to the bright picture of the Ancient City was dark enough. If the citizens engaged in war, and war was always, until the consolidation of empire by Rome, a possible event, defeat meant the risk of having the city razed to the ground, or turned into an open village; sometimes a general massacre, or slavery for man and woman. Or, if in domestic politics, a crisis occurred, which with us means a change of government, in Greece or Italy it might imply to the losers at the ballot confiscation and exile; and the defeated party, be they democrat or aristocrat, lost home and country, and became outcasts and outlaws until they could get a reversal of the sentence. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the full privileges of citizen belonged only to a portion of the inhabitants of the city — a portion which might not exceed one-tenth, whilst ninety per cent. of the actual dwellers within the walls might be slaves, freedmen, aliens, strangers, clients, and camp-followers. And the slaves in the public service, in the mines and factories, or in the farms, docks, ships, or warehouses led a life too often of appalling misery and toil. Even the household slaves who shared the intimacy of their master or mistress, who were often their superiors in culture and refinement, were liable to horrible punishments, to bodily and moral degradation, and to any cruelty or insult which brutality and caprice might inflict. During the brilliant age at Greece, and at last under the empire at Rome, domestic life in our modern sense was stunted or corrupt. At Greece, the wife was too often the drudge or the appendage of the household; at Rome, she too often became the tyrant. Female society in its higher meaning was unknown, unless in a depraved sense. Vice, indolence, indecency, were not only things not involving shame, but things which in an elegant form were a matter of public pride.

Thus this apotheosis of the City had both black and brilliant sides. But there is no essential connexion between its bright and its dark aspect. This religious veneration of the City, this worship of the City as the practical type of religion, was extravagant, anti-social, and inhuman in the wider sense of patriotism and human duty. But it had elements of fixity, of dignity, of reality, and of moral and religious fervour, that are wholly unknown to our city life, inconceivable even by us, elements to which our tepid Patriotism makes but a feeble approach. The citizens were not indeed the members of a great nation, but a very close, jealous, and selfish civic aristocracy. Within their own order they gave the world fine examples of equality, simplicity, sociability, and public devotion, such as are hardly intelligible to modern men, such as no republican enthusiasm has ever in modern days attempted to revive. In the horror of dirt and the religion of personal health and perfection, they gave the world inimitable examples at which we look back in wonder and awe. For the love of beauty we have taken to us the love of comfort; for the profusion of art we have substituted material production; for the *religio loci* we prefer the vague immensities of the Universe; in place of public magnificence and social communion, we make idols of our domestic privacy and private luxuriousness.

II. *The Mediæval City.*

We turn to imagine some city of the Middle Ages. Here also would be as in an ancient city, a long circuit of walls, with gates and towers, a military and highly organised society, a complex religious system, intense civic pride and patriotism. And yet the differences are vast. The grand difference of all is that the city is no longer the State, except in some parts of Italy, and even there not in the early Middle Ages. In the early Middle Ages, the city is not the State or the nation: it is only a stronghold, or fortified magazine in the barony, duchy, kingdom, or empire. It is only a big and very complicated castle, with its defensive system exactly like any other castle, governed by a mayor, bailiff, or prior, and the burgher council, and not necessarily by a feudal lord. Except in Italy and a few free towns along the Mediterranean at particular periods, no city counted itself as wholly outside the jurisdiction of some overlord, king, or emperor.

Apart from its political and legal privileges, a mediæval city was something like Windsor Castle or the Tower of London, on a large scale and with many subdivisions, governed by an elected corporation and not by a baron or viceroy. The ancient city, however much it had to fear war and opposition from its rival cities or states, could feel safe within its own territories from any attack on the part of its rural neighbours, subjects, or fellow-citizens. There it was mistress, or rather the city included the territory around it. No Athenian ever dreamed of being invaded by the inhabitants of Attica, or even of Bœotia. No Roman troubled himself about Latians or Etruscans other than the citizens of Latian or Tuscan cities. City life in the Middle Ages was a very different thing. Until a mediæval city became very strong and had secured round itself an ample territory, it was always in difficulties with the lords of neighbouring fiefs and castles. Even in Italy, before the great cities had crushed the feudal-lords and had forced them to become citizens, the mediæval cities had constantly to fight for their existence against chiefs whose castles lay within sight. The ancient city was a State — the collective centre of an organised territory, supreme within it, and owing no fealty to any other sovereign, temporal or spiritual, outside its own territory. The mediæval city was only a privileged town within a fief or kingdom, having charters, rights, and fortifications of its own; but, both in religious and in political rank, bound in absolute duty to far distant and much more exalted superiors.

Partly as a consequence of its being in constant danger from its neighbours, it had a defensive system vastly more elaborate than that of ancient cities. Its outer walls were of enormous height, thickness, and complexity. They were flanked with gigantic towers, gates, posterns, and watch-towers; it had a broad moat round it and a complicated series of drawbridges, stockades, barbicans, and outworks. We may see something of it in the old city of Carcassonne in the south of France, destroyed by St. Louis in 1262, in the walls of Rome round the Vatican, and in the old walls of Constantinople on the western side near the Gate of St. Romanus. From without the Mediæval City looked like a vast castle. And the military discipline and precautions were entirely those of a castle. In peace or war, it was a fortress first, and a dwelling-place afterwards. This vast apparatus of defence cramped the space and shut out light, air, and prospect. Few ancient cities would have looked from without like a fortress; for the walls were much lower and simpler, in the absence of any elaborate system of artillery. But the Mediæval City with its far loftier walls, towers, gates, and successive defences looked more like a prison than a town, and indeed to a great extent it was a prison. There could seldom have been much prospect from within it, except of its own walls and towers; there were few open spaces, usually there was one small market-place, no public gardens or walks; the city was encumbered with castles, monasteries, and castellated enclosures; and the bridges and quays were crowded with a confused pile of lofty wooden houses; and, as the walls necessarily ran along any sea or river frontage that the city had, it was impossible to get any general view of the town, or to look up or down the river for the closely-packed buildings on the bridges.

As a rule there was no citadel as in the ancient cities, though there was sometimes an upper and a lower town, and often a castle in one corner or side of the city, as the Tower is at London and the Bastille was at Paris, St. Angelo at Rome, or Blachernae and the Seven Towers at Constantinople. The place of citadel was usually occupied by some vast central cathedral or abbey; which, with its adjuncts, occupied nearly one-tenth of the whole area in such cities as Lincoln, York, Amiens, Reims, Orvieto; and even in cities like Florence, Paris, Rouen, London, Antwerp, and Cologne, stood out in the far distance towering over the city as did the Acropolis at Athens or the Capitol at Rome. Within the walls, and around the walls for a distance of many miles, was a profusion of churches, abbeys, nunneries, chapels, oratories, varying from such enormous piles as those of Westminster, of *St. Germain des Près*, St. Peter's and the Vatican at Rome, to the smallest chantry on the pier of a bridge where a benison could be said.

Many of these churches were far larger than the ancient temples; and if their architecture had not the stately and simple dignity of the Doric fane, they were far richer in varied works of art, more gorgeous in colour, and infinitely more charged with religious and æsthetic impression. Painting, fresco, mosaic, stained glass, gilding, carved statues, coloured marbles, images and reliefs in thousands, chased gold and silver utensils, bronzes, ivories, silks, velvets, tapestries, embroideries, illuminated books, carved wood, bells, clocks, perfumes, organs, instruments, choirs of singers — every beautiful and delightful thing was crowded together, with the relics of saints, the tombs of great men, the graves of citizens for centuries, wonder-working pictures, miraculous images, lamps and candles on a thousand altars, chapels, offerings and images dedicated to countless saints, martyrs, and holy men. A mediæval Church, however much it lacked the austere simplicity and faultless symmetry of a Greek temple, was as much deeper and more full in its solemnity and power, as the Catholic mythology was deeper and nobler than the classical mythology.

So too the Church was morally a far nobler thing than the Temple. It was no mere colonnade for processions, lounging, and society. It was this, but much more also. It was school, art-museum, music-hall, place of personal prayer, of confession of sin, preaching, teaching, and civilising. It combined what at Athens was to be sought in Parthenon, Theseum, Theatre, Academus, Stoa, and Agora — and very much beside which was never known at Athens at all — sacrament, confession, penance, sermon. A Mediæval city was full of such centres of moral and spiritual education; and in and around such cities as Rome, Paris, and London, the religious edifices of all kinds were counted not by hundreds, but by thousands. Every great mediæval city contained its monasteries, nunneries, hospices, and colleges, vast ranges of foundations that were at once schools, training colleges, hospitals, refuges, and poorhouses. Here was the grand difference between the ancient and the mediæval city. Within the city, there were now no slaves, no serfs, no abject and outlaw caste of any kind, except the Jews who formed a separate city of their own. All citizens were free: all without exception had rights of some kind. The churches, monasteries, hospitals, and schools existed, in original design, mainly for the poor, the wretched, and the diseased. Christ loved the weak and the suffering. And the doors of His house stood ever open to the weak, the suffering, the halt, the blind, and the lame. The church of the Middle Ages suffered little children to come unto Him. The poorest, the weakest, the most abject, were welcome there. The Priest, the Monk, the Nun taught, clothed, and nursed the children of the poor, and the suffering poor. The leper was tended in lazar-houses, even it might be by kings and princesses, with the devotion of Christian self-sacrifice. For the first time in history there were schools, hospitals, poor-houses, for the most lowly, compassion for the most miserable, and consolation in Heaven for those who had found earth a Hell.

The old Greek and Roman religion of external cleanness was turned into a sin. The outward and visible sign of sanctity now was to be unclean. No one was clean: but the devout Christian was unutterably foul. The tone of the Middle Ages in the matter of dirt was a form of mental disease. Cooped up in castles and walled cities, with narrow courts and sunless alleys, they would pass day and night in the same clothes, within the same airless, gloomy, windowless, and pestiferous chambers; they would go to bed without night clothes, and sleep under uncleansed sheepskins and frieze rugs; they would wear the same leather, fur, and woollen garments for a lifetime, and even for successive generations; they ate their meals without forks, and covered up the orts with rushes; they flung their refuse out of the window into the street or piled it up in the back-yard; the streets were narrow, unpaved, crooked lanes through which, under the very palace turrets, men and beasts tramped knee-deep in noisome mire. This was at intervals varied with fetid rivulets and open cesspools; every church was crammed with rotting corpses and surrounded with graveyards, sodden with cadaveric liquids, and strewn with disinterred bones. Round these charnel houses and pestiferous churches were piled old decaying wooden houses, their sole air being these deadly exhalations, and their sole water supply being these polluted streams or wells dug in this reeking soil. Even in the palaces and castles of the rich the same bestial habits prevailed. Prisoners rotted in noisome dungeons under the banqueting hall; corpses were buried under the floor of the private chapel; scores of soldiers and attendants slept in gangs for months together in the same hall or guard-room where they ate and drank, played and fought. It is one of those problems which still remain for historians to solve — how the race ever survived the insanitary conditions of the Middle Ages, and still more how it was ever continued — what was the normal death-rate and the normal birth-rate of cities? The towns were no doubt maintained by immigration, and the rural labourer had the best chance of life, if he could manage to escape death by violence or famine.

With all this, there was about the great cities of the Middle Ages a noble spirit of civic life and energy, an ever-present love of Art, a zeal for good work as good work, and a deep under-lying sense of social duty and personal faithfulness. A real and sacred bond held the master and his apprentices together, the master workman to his men, the craftsman to his gild-brethren, the gild-men in the mass as a great aggregate corporation. Each burgher's house was his factory and workshop, each house, each parish, each gild, each town had its own patron saint, its own special church, its own feudal patron, its corporate life, its own privileges, traditions, and emblems. Thus grew up for the whole range of the artificer's life, for the civic life, for the commercial life, a profound sense of consecrated rule which amounted to a kind of religion of Industry, a sort of patriotism of Industry, an Art of Industry, the like of which has never existed before or since. It was in ideal and in aim (though alas! not often in fact) the highest form of secular life that human society has yet reached. It rested ultimately, though somewhat vaguely, on religious Duty. And it produced a sense of mutual obligation between master and man, employer and employed, old and young, rich and poor, wise and ignorant. To restore the place of this sense of social obligation in Industry, the world has been seeking and experimenting now for these four centuries past.

III. *The Modern City.*

It is needless to describe the modern city: we all know what it is, some of us too well. The first great fact about the Modern City is that it is in a far lower stage of organic life. It is almost entirely bereft of any religious, patriotic, or artistic character as a whole. There is in modern cities a great deal of active religious life, much public spirit, in certain parts a love of beauty, taste, and cultivation of a special kind. But it is not embodied in the city; it is not associated with the city; it does not radiate from the city. The Modern City is ever changing, loose in its organisation, casual in its form. It grows up, or extends suddenly, no man knows how, in a single generation — in America in a single decade. Its denizens come and go, pass on, changing every few years and even months. Few families have lived in the same city for three successive generations. An Athenian, Syracusan, Roman family had dwelt in their city for twenty generations.

A typical industrial city of modern times has no founder, no traditional heroes, no patrons or saints, no emblem, no history, no definite circuit. In a century, it changes its population over and over again, and takes on two or three different forms. In ten or twenty years it evolves a vast new suburb, a mere wen of bricks or stone, with no god or demi-god for its founder, but a speculative builder, a syndicate or a railway. The speculative builder or the company want a quick return for their money. The new suburb is occupied by people who are so busy, and in such a hurry to get to work, that in taking a house, their sole inquiry is — how near is it to the station, or where the tram-car puts you down.

The result is, that a Modern City is an amorphous amæba-like aggregate of buildings, wholly without defined limits, form, permanence, organisation, or beauty — often infinitely dreary, monstrous, grimy, noisy, and bewildering. In America and in parts of England, a big town springs up in twenty or thirty years out of a moor, or out of a village on a mill-stream. If you leave your native town — say to go to India, and return after five-and-twenty years, you will not find your way about it ; and a gasometer or a railway-siding will have occupied the site of the family mansion. A modern city is the embodiment of indefinite change, the unlimited pursuit of new investments and quick returns, and of everybody doing what he finds to pay best. The idea of Patriotism, Art, Culture, Social Organisation, Religion — as identified with the city, springing out of it, stimulated by it — is an idea beyond the conception of modern men.

There are certainly cities in Europe where some remnant of the old civic patriotism and municipal life survives, as it does in Paris, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Florence, Hamburg, and Bern. In the British islands, perhaps Edinburgh may be said to have retained a sense of civic life, art, and history ; it is an organic and historic city — not too large, and of singular and striking natural features. York, Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester, Oxford, are historic cities with the sacred fire still burning feebly in their ancient sanctuary. London, if we limit London to one-fortieth of its area and one-tenth of its inhabitants, has still the consciousness of the culture, glory, and life of a great city. But for the rest of its area and population, it is lost and buried under the monotonous pile of streets, over an area as large as a county — without history, culture, or consciousness of any organic life as an effective city.

The monstrous, oppressive, paralysing bulk of modern London is becoming one of the great diseases of English civilisation. It is a national calamity that one-sixth of the entire population of England are, as Londoners, cut off at once both from country life and from city life; for those who dwell in the vast suburbs of London are cut off from city life in any true sense. A country covered with houses is not a City. Four or five millions of people herded together do not make a body of fellow-citizens. A mass of streets so endless that it is hardly possible on foot to get out of them into the open in a long day's tramp — streets so monotonous that, but for the names on the street corner, they can hardly be distinguished one from the other — with suburbs so unorganised and mechanical that there is nothing to recall the dignity and power of a great city — with a population so movable and so unsociable that they are unknown to each other by sight or name, have no interest in each other's lives, cannot be induced to act in common, have no common sympathies, enjoyments, or pride, who are perpetually hurrying each his own way to catch his own train, omnibus, or tram-car, eager to do a good day's business on the cheapest terms, and then get to some distant home to a meal or to rest. That is not life, nor is it society. These huge barracks are not cities. Nor can an organic body of citizens be made out of four millions of human creatures individually grinding out a monotonous existence.

The bulk, ugliness, flabbiness of modern London render city life, in the true and noble sense, impossible or very rudimentary. It would be unjust to pronounce Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow too big to make true cities —

though they have hardly yet found how to deal with their huge extent. But Paris, with four times the area and the population of these, still has contrived to remain an organic and mighty city. But Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow (and the same is more or less true of Birmingham, Newcastle, Leeds, and Bristol), have enlarged their boundaries so rapidly and so entirely under the dominant passion of turning over capital and increasing the output — that beauty, dignity, culture, and social life have been left to take care of themselves, and the life of the labouring masses (for the well-to-do protect themselves by living outside and reducing their city life to 'works' and an office) is monotonous to all and to many almost bereft of physical comfort and moral elevation. An Athenian or a Roman who might have risen from his long sleep in the Cerameicus or from beside the Appian Way to find himself a denizen of one of our cotton or metal cities, with its sooty air and its polluted streams, its *mesquin* market-place, its dingy lanes, and monotonous factories, with belching chimneys and steam 'hooters,' and the endless hurrying to and fro of its melancholy 'hands,' would have fancied himself in one of the regions of Hades. The unregulated extension of the factory system, of the steam and coal industry to modern cities, has proved as destructive of comfort and in some places and in some periods as dangerous to health as anything due to the defensive necessities and the unclean ignorance of the Middle Ages. There have been cases where it caused a worse pollution of water and of air. And it certainly made life more dismal and far less available for art and nobility of soul.

There is no occasion for pessimism : and none but a reactionist or a madman could think of going back to ancient times whether of Polytheism or Feudalism. There are sides of modern city life, after all, far grander than anything in the ancient or the mediæval world, though they are not so directly the outcome of the organic city. Our civilisation has long been a national rather than a civic growth ; and we look more to the nation than we look to the city. In spite of steam, smoke, factories, and all the selfish recklessness that distorts our industrial existence, many of our modern cities, by zealous sanitary science, and by the passion for warring on disease that so nobly marks our age, have attained a death-rate unparalleled in the history of cities, often reaching to half the death-rate common in mediæval and Oriental cities. It must be remembered that London, considering its vast size and its special conditions, must be counted as standing at the head of the civilised and uncivilised world, for its systematic efforts and final success in reducing the death-rate. It is now the least noxious to life of all great cities of the world, with a mortality far below that of the other capitals of Europe, and vastly below that of St. Petersburg or Calcutta. That means that we save year by year some hundred thousand souls in London alone.

Nor is this all. Our city schools, museums, libraries, parks, hospitals, clubs, our charitable, social, and educational associations (though it must be said they are only in part the outcome of any city life or city organisation) surpass anything which the ancient or the mediæval world could show. Such cities as Glasgow and Manchester have at last a water supply that may fairly compare with the Roman, and in many of our Midland towns the water supply is pure, if not abundant. It is obvious that the police, the paving, the lighting, and in a few cities the sewage system far surpasses anything ever known in history. Birmingham has done wonders with great difficulties and unpromising materials. And the gigantic and scientific organisation of municipal life in such capitals as Berlin and Paris has begun to impress even the conservative mind of the Londoner, and may yet find rivals in our own mighty metropolis. In towns like Birmingham, Nottingham, Leeds, Oxford, Bradford, and Huddersfield, the means of education and culture are high above the level of average English civilisation. Some of our more moderate historic towns retain or have regained the old spirit of civic life that did so much in the Middle Ages. We will not despair. Tremendous has been the revolution caused by modern industry. We have lived through a moral earthquake. But the energy and social sympathy which still beat in the heart of the English people will at last bring us to a nobler type.

IV. *The Ideal City.*

Turn to the city as it might be. To deal first with the primary physical condition of size. A city of four millions of inhabitants covering an area of more than one hundred square miles is an impossible city. It is a Wen, as Cobbett called it, which prevents all the real uses of a city life. The concentrated smoke of a million chimneys, the collective sewage of four millions of souls, the interminable area they cover, the unmanageableness of such a mass for all true social purposes, is an insuperable difficulty to a people who have not the genius for city life that marks Parisians. A city where one cannot walk of an evening into the open, wherein millions live and die without seeing the spring flowers and the June foliage and the autumn harvest, from year's end to year's end, is an incubus on civilisation. Paris, with its wonderful organisation and system of lodging in vast and lofty blocks, is still, it is true, a city, though one far too big and already becoming unmanageable. A population of a million would be extreme, even for a capital. The best type of city would not exceed a quarter or a fifth of that number. The essential thing in a great city is the power and variety that arises from the association of a very large body of organised families living a common life and combining for great social ends. A quarter of a million or less gives that variety and that power. When the number is extended to a million or to two or four millions the result is monotony rather than variety and disorganisation rather than association. The root element of city life is daily contact and common society, and the numbers to whom daily contact is possible are determined by the physical conditions of the living man. No machinery or inventions can do more than facilitate physical contact in a moderate degree. But five millions can no more form a real city organism than they could win the battle of Salamis.

It would be childish to expect that Acts of Parliament can limit the growth of cities. But the increasing enormity of London, and indeed of Paris, is becoming a national danger of the first rank to which legislation may properly be addressed in an indirect and tentative way. We have no place here to be discussing the laws which affect the tenure of land. But if we find that country folk are continuously over generations flocking into cities, and that under all conditions and in spite of the discomforts and crowding of cities, it must be that country people do not find themselves happy in their country homes. The well-to-do and the well educated show no tendency to crowd into cities : but very much the reverse. Hence we have the singular phenomenon that whilst the rich townsmen are hurrying to pass their lives in the country, the poor countrymen are hurrying into the cities. It may well be that, however great the drawbacks and discomforts of modern cities, and however poor the social life they afford, the modern country village may offer even less entertainment and fewer opportunities of social life. If that is so, it is a thing that can be remedied indirectly by legislation, and mainly by a higher sense of social obligation on the part of all who live in the country. If great landowners had taken up the lead which in feudal times they possessed and had proved themselves lords of the manor in any but a pecuniary sense, the draining off of the country population into the towns could never have become the prominent fact of the nineteenth century.

A city ought to provide for its citizens air, water, light — absolutely pure, unlimited in quantity and gratuitous to all. There is no good reason why water should be sold (at any rate in public places) more than air, or light, or highways. Air, light, highways, water, are the primary conditions of civilisation. It is the interest of all that every citizen should have as much of these as he wants. There is no better reason to compel an individual citizen to buy water for sanitary uses than to compel him separately to pay for a walk in Hyde Park or a passage across London Bridge.. In feudal times there were tolls upon everything. A high civilisation abolishes tolls and furnishes the necessaries of life to all equally. Now air, light, roads, and water stand on a different footing from food and clothes. Food and clothing are produced in separate pieces, are infinitely varied, and are adapted to an infinite variety of personal wants and tastes. A loaf of bread, a beef-steak, a jug of beer, are individually produced and individually consumed. They remain ear-marked, identifiable, transferable, and the subject of property, and of commerce. Air, light, water, passage (in their public and collective use), have not this character: and their public use should be free to all citizens.

We need the Roman system of water supply. Abundant and pure rivers from the mountains should be carried into the city, with fountains, baths, wash-houses free in every ward without stint. The Roman aqueducts are one of the few features of material civilisation which have never been revived by any later age. We are still suffering under the mediæval horror of washing. When we had again adequate aqueducts we might hope to see the rivers and brooks that pass through our cities bright and clear like a trout stream, and 'silver Thames' cease to be a term of reproach. Every chimney would consume its own smoke; every sewer would be wholesome, for all noxious gases would be pumped up into safe spaces; all refuse would be straightway disinfected and consumed. To use a stream as a drain, to discharge refuse into any public place or course, to emit noisome odours or dangerous gases into any public thing, to do or to suffer anything that could spread infection, would be high treason against humanity visited with the extreme rigour of the law.

The whole conditions of our industrial life would be reorganised; till our factory and workshop habits would be as repulsive to our descendants as a mediæval charnel-house is to us to-day. It is not merely in the matter of hours that we need reform, but in the physical and even moral conditions of work. A factory, or a workshop, wherein men, women, and children are employed day by day, would be regarded as an outrage on civilisation, if its physical conditions were not as free from anything that can endanger health as the drawing-room of a wealthy family. And it would be a sort of public scandal that it should remain as repulsive and depressing as the average cotton-mill of Lancashire.

The entire treatment of sickness and of mortality would be reorganised. Every house, or block of houses, for the collective system of tenements must ultimately obtain in cities, would be arranged with due provision for the care of the sick and of the dead. Infirmaries, disinfectants, ambulances, mortuaries on a large scale, will have to be arranged, systematically and scientifically, both for public and for private use. Our houses and blocks will be provided with appliances needful in sickness, accident, birth, convalescence, and death. Cremation will take the place of the ghastly system of interment — Cremation with facilities for the due disposal of the ashes. Cremation has made but little way yet in superseding the growing evils of interment, because it has not yet provided for the *religio loci* and the cherished continuity of the 'remains' of the departed. Rightly understood, Cremation offers just the same opportunities for the local consecration of these remains as does burial — the same opportunities and far better. The ashes which are the residuum of cremation may be treated with the same religious reverence that we have been accustomed to show to the putrescent contents of our hideous coffins — the same reverence in far more beautiful and familiar ways. We have made the fatal mistake of assuming that the proper care of our dead ends with the furnace of the *Crematorium*. No more so than it ends with the undertaker's hearse. The pure ashes of the beloved dead must be reverently inclosed in urns or sarcophagi of any kind we choose: and these urns with the innocent ashes within may be placed in cemeteries, if we prefer, or better still in *columbaria* and chapels in the beautiful *Campo Santos* that will arise in the precincts and public places of the city itself.

The hospital system must be revised. Every hospital would be strictly isolated — placed in the purest air, incapable of spreading infection, and arranged for constant and radical disinfection. For many purposes, it would consist mainly of movable iron sheds in some open ground, continually removed, constantly purified, and the consumable parts burnt. Into these infirmaries the sick would be carried by railways, specially constructed on the ambulance system. A few accident or special wards might be retained in isolated buildings, in convenient spots in the city, for emergencies or definite cases. But all men of science know the inevitable evils of vast hospitals in the midst of crowded cities. The system continues, not for the sake of the sick, but for the convenience of the staff, and for facilities of access generally. An abnormal death-rate in the hospital, and continual infection around it, are still endured, in order that the medical attendants and their pupils may have their cases at hand, that the organisation of a complex system of carriage may be avoided, and partly no doubt that the world may have ever before their eyes, in some conspicuous site in the city, a pompous and costly edifice, which, on scientific grounds, should never be placed anywhere at all, and least of all on that central spot. To expose a family to infection, to spread contagion in a district, by the treatment of the sick, or the dead, or by any kind of refuse, to pollute open water, on a public way or place, would be an act of ruffianism and sacrilege at once. Sickness from all forms of infection and contagion would be reduced to the minimum of inevitable accident. The death-rate of such a city would fall from 20 or 30 per thousand to 12 or 14 per thousand.

Next to pure air, water, sunlight, free ways, and protection against blood-poisoning, human life needs exercise and recreation for body and limb. The city of the future will have its squares, gardens, parks, play-grounds, and gymnastic courts, free to all, and within reach of all. No child, boy, or girl will be forced to play in a gutter; no youths will be reduced to lounge about the street. The play-ground will be open to all, and almost within a mile of the house, or it will be almost useless. There are two towns in England where that great institution, the Playground, is adequately developed: these are Oxford and Cambridge, where some think it is almost overdone; and Leicester, Derby, and some Midland and Northern towns are not wholly unprovided. But the opportunities which have long been secured to a few rich students, and to some sportsmen elsewhere, will be open to all citizens in the city of the future, as they were at Athens, Sparta, Syracuse, or Rome.

A city, worthy of such a name, should offer to all its citizens noble public buildings, and impressive monuments within the reach of all. The ancient rule was to live at home in simple lodgings, and in public to have ever in view beautiful and stately public buildings —

> 'Privatus illis census erat brevis —
> Commune magnum.'

We reverse all this. We put the extreme of luxury that we can command into our homes, and we starve our public places. In the ancient world, to present noble monuments continually to the eyes of the citizens, was regarded as one of the main uses of a City. With us, public monuments are too often suspected of being a corporation job, the means of getting some obscure artist a commission, or furnishing the Mayor with a knighthood, when the Prince or Princess 'inaugurates' the opening ceremony. 'Inaugurate' once meant a solemn and auspicious religious act. In Athens, Rome, Florence, Venice, Verona, Cologne, Rouen, or Winchester — that is in classical or in mediæval ages — the possession of a noble city, crowded with splendid and historic monuments, was the cherished birthright of the citizen — a potent source of civilisation. As it was once — so it will be again!

The citizen of the future will live in a City, through which silver streams will flow, in which the air will be spotless of soot, when water will bubble forth in fountains and reservoirs at every corner, where gardens, promenades, open squares, flowers, green lawns, porticos, and noble monuments will abound; the air and water as fresh as at Bern, with gardens, statues as plentiful as they are in Paris, and more beautiful in art. At Rome, the citizen was reminded at every turn of his country's history by some monument, shrine, bust, or statue. There is but one city of the modern world — the French capital, where any attempt is made to develop this noble instrument of city life.

Museums, statues, galleries, colleges, schools, and public halls will no longer be concentrated in overgrown capitals; they will be universal in every moderate town. No town would be worth living in, if it does not offer a free library, a good art-gallery, lecture and music halls, baths, and gymnasia — free to all and within reach of all. To use all these, we shall need a day of rest in the week, as well as a day of worship on Sunday. Every citizen will be free of all the resources needed to cultivate his body, his mind, his heart: — his enjoyment of life, health, skill, and grace, his sense of beauty, his desire for society, his thirst for knowledge. If he does not use these resources, the fault will be his.

These things are not to be had by Acts of Parliament, nor by multiplying Inspectors, nor perhaps by any single machinery whatever. Ideals are realised slowly, by long efforts, after many failures and constant mistakes. To reach ideals we have to reach a higher social morality, an enlarged conception of human life, a more humane type of religious duty.

CHAPTER IX.

ROME REVISITED.[1]

He who revisits Rome to-day in these busy times of King Umberto, having known the Eternal City of the last generation in the torpid reign of Pio Nono, cannot stifle the poignant sense of having lost one of the most rare visions that this earth had ever to present. The Colosseum, it is true, the Forum, the Vatican, and St. Peter's are there still; the antiquarians make constant new discoveries — fresh sites, statues, palaces, tombs, and museums are year by year revealed to the eager tourist; and many a cloister and chapel, once hermetically closed, is now a public show. But the light and poetry have gone out of Rome for ever. Vast historic convents are cold and silent as the grave, and the Papal city is like a mediæval town under interdict. French boulevards are being driven through the embattled strongholds of Colonnas and Orsinis, and omnibus and tram-car roll through the Forum of Trajan, and by the Golden House of Nero. The yellow Tiber now peacefully flows between granite quays, but the mouldering palaces and the festooned arches that Piranesi loved have been improved away.

One who is neither *codino*, ultramontane, nor pessimist may still utter one groan of regret for the halo that once enveloped Rome. We may know that it was inevitable, that it was the price of a nation's life, and yet feel the sorrow which is due to the passing away of some majestic thing that the world can never see again. It is now twenty years since the late Professor Freeman, then visiting Rome for the first time, wrote as his forecast that if Rome, as the capital of Italy, should grow and flourish, a great part of its unique charm would be lost, and the havoc to be wrought in its antiquities would be frightful. The havoc is wrought; the charm is gone, in spite of startling discoveries and whole museums full of new antiquities. It had to be.

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, May 1893, No. 317, vol. 53.

In the space of some thirty years I have visited Rome four times, at long intervals, and each time I groan anew. I was *Italianissimo* in my hot youth, and I am assuredly, not *Papalino* in my maturer age. I rejoice with the new life of the Italian people ; I know that for the regenerated nation Rome is essential as its capital ; I know that a growing modern city must wear the aspect of modern civilisation. I repudiate the whining of sentimentalists over the conditions of modern progress ; and the advice which Napoleon's creatures gave to the Romans, 'to be content with the contemplation of their ruins,' has the true ring of an oppressor. We acknowledge all that, and are no obscurantists to shudder at a railroad with Ruskinian affectation. But yet, to those who loved the poetry of old Papal Rome, the prose of the modernised new Rome is a sad and instructive memory.

When I first saw Rome, it was not connected by any railway with Northern Italy. We had to travel by the road, and I cannot forget the weird effect of that Roman Maremma, purple and crimson with an autumn sunset ; the buffaloes, and the wild cattlemen and *pecorari* in sheepskins ; the old-world coaches and postilions ; the desolate plain broken by ruins and castles ; the mediæval absurdities of Papal officialism ; the suffumigations and the *visas;* the cumbrous pomposity of some Roman *principi* returning from *villeggiatura*—it was as though one had passed by enchantment into the seventeenth century, with its picturesque barbarism, and one quite expected a guerilla band of horsemen to issue from the castle of Montalto.

And then Rome itself, so perfectly familiar that it seemed like a mere returning to the old haunt of childhood, with its fern-clad ruins standing in open spaces, gardens, or vineyards; the huge solitudes within the walls; the cattle and the stalls beneath the trees on the Campo Vaccino, forty feet above the spot where now professors lecture to crowds in the recent excavations; the grotesque parade of cardinals and *monsignori;* the narrow, ill-lighted streets; the swarm of monks, friars, and prelates of every order and race; the air of mouldering abandonment in the ancient city, as of some corner of mediæval Europe left forgotten and untouched by modern progress, with all the historic glamour, the pictorial squalor, the Turkish routine, all the magnificence of obsolete forms of civilisation which clung round the Vatican and were seen there only in Western Europe.

It had to go, and it is gone; and Rome, in twenty or thirty years, has become like any other European city big, noisy, vulgar, overgrown, Frenchified, and syndicate-ridden, hardly to be distinguished from Lyons or Turin, except that it has in the middle of its streets some enormous masses of ruin, many huge, empty convents, and some vast churches, apparently abandoned by the Church. But the ruins, which used to stand in a rural solitude like Stonehenge or Rievaulx, are now mere piles of stone in crowded streets, like the Palais des Thermes at Paris. The sacred sites of Forum and Roma Quadrata are now objects in a museum. The *Cloaca* are embedded in the new stone quay, and are become a mere 'exhibit,' like York House Water-Gate in our own embankment. The wild foliage and the memorial altars have been torn out of the Colosseum, and the Ælian Bridge is overshadowed by a new iron enormity. Rome, which, thirty years ago, was a vision of the past, is to-day a busy Italian town, with a dozen museums, striving to become a third-rate Paris.

The mediæval halo is gone, but the hard facts remain. For to the historian Rome must always be the central city of this earth — the spot towards which all earlier history of mankind must in the end converge — from which all modern history must issue. Rome is the true microcosm, wherein the vast panorama of human civilisation is reflected as on a mirror. It is this diversity, continuity, and world-wide range of interest which place it apart above all other cities of men. This one is more lovely, that one is more complete; another city is vaster, or another has some unique and special glory. But no other city of the world approaches Rome in the enormous span of its history, and in this character of being the centre, as the Greeks said the ὀμφαλός, if not of this planet, at least of Europe.

From this point of view, it cannot be denied that the recent changes which have destroyed the poetry of Rome have greatly enlarged its antiquarian interest. What the poet and the painter have lost the historian has gained. Regarded as a museum of archæology, the city is far richer to the student. And that not merely by multiplication of remains, statues, and carvings, similar to what we had, but by new discoveries which have modified our knowledge of the history of the city. The continually growing mass of pre-historic relics, the Etruscan tombs and foundations on the Aventine and the Esquiline, the early fortifications of the Palatine, the remains of regal Rome, the systematic exploration of the Forum and the Palatine, the house of the vestals, the contents of the Kircher Museum, and of the new Museum in the baths of Diocletian, the excavation of the Colosseum, and of the palace of Nero, the complete tracing of the Servian circumvallation, and all that has been done to reopen cemeteries and tombs — have given a new range and distinctness to the history of Rome as a whole.

We must now extend that history backwards by centuries before the mythical age of Romulus and his tribesmen on the Palatine; and we know that somewhere on the Seven Hills there once dwelt one of the most ancient prehistoric races of Europe. Even the speculative builder and the hated railroads have enriched the museums and opened unexpected treasures to the antiquarian. One is forced to confess that to historical research new fields have been opened, even whilst the unique vision of the Eternal City faded away as quickly as a winter sunset. The Cæsars found Rome of brick, and left it of marble. The House of Savoy found it a majestic ruin; they have made it an inexhaustible museum.

Compare Rome with other famous cities, which far surpass it in mediæval associations — with Florence, Venice, Rouen, Oxford, Prague. They present at most four or five centuries of the Middle Ages with vivid power and charm: but this is only one chapter in the history of Rome. Athens, Constantinople, Venice, are more beautiful. And if Constantinople surpasses Rome in the dramatic contrast of Asia and Europe, and the secular combat between the East and the West, Byzantium was but a late imitation of Rome, and the tremendous scenes which the Bosphorus has witnessed seem but episodes when compared with the long annals of the Tiber. Constantinople, indeed, was a Rome transported bodily to the East. Paris and London certainly surpass Rome in that they record a thousand years of the destiny of nations still growing, and that we can hear in their streets the surging of a mighty life to which that of

Rome is now a poor provincial copy. But the thousand years of Paris and of London are but a span in the countless years of the Eternal City. All roads lead to Rome: all capitals aim at reviving the image and effect of the Imperial City: all history ends with Rome, or begins with Rome.

There are three elements wherein the historical value of Rome surpasses that of any extant city: first, the enormous continuity of its history; next, the diversity of that interest; and lastly, the cosmopolitan range of its associations. These hill-crests beside the Tiber have been the home of a disciplined people (we must now believe) for some three thousand years, and it may well be much more; and during the whole of that vast period there has been no absolute or prolonged break. Athens, Jerusalem, Antioch, Damascus, Alexandria, Syracuse, Marseilles, and York, whatever they may once have been, whatever they may have recently become, fell out of the vision of history for long centuries together, like some variable star out of heaven, and sank into insignificance and oblivion. To very many the city of David and of the Passion has absorbing interests, such as no other spot on earth can approach; just as to the scholar the scene from the Pnyx at Athens calls up a sum of memories of unique intensity and delight. But the four transcendent centuries, when Athens was the eye of Greece, the eye of the thinking world, were followed by a thousand years when Athens was an obscure village; and if the ancient history of Jerusalem was longer than that of Athens, it has been followed by a still more overwhelming fall.

All other famous cities of the ancient world have waned and fallen, in some cases, as with Athens, Alexandria, and Marseilles, to rise again out of a sleep of ages. Or if, like Paris and London, they are growing still, it is during some four or five centuries only that they have been the foremost cities of the world. But for two thousand years Rome has enjoyed an unbroken pre-eminence, for five centuries as the temporal mistress of the civilised world, and for some fifteen centuries as the spiritual head of the Catholic world. This dominant place in human evolution, prolonged over such immense periods of time in unbroken continuity, makes Rome the spot on earth where the story of civilisation can be locally centred and visibly recorded.

This is the real power and the true lesson of Rome; and in a dim way, it was felt by our ancestors who in the olden days made the 'grand tour' to enrich their galleries and to confer with *virtuosi*, or who in a later age followed the footsteps of *Corinne*, Goethe, and Byron. Something of the kind remained down to the time of Pio Nono. There was still a certain unity of effect in Rome; and even the more frivolous tourists had some sense of that over-mastering human destiny which caused Byron to break forth —

> 'O Rome, my country, city of the soul!'

But all that has happened in the last twenty years has destroyed that visual impression. The sudden swelling forth of the city into a modern busy town three or four times larger than the old sleepy city of the popes, the suppression of the convents and the external ceremonial, and the sullen withdrawal of the Papacy, the deadly war between modern democracy and ultramontane ecclesiasticism, the flooding of the old city with the triumphs of the modern builder, and the Haussmannisation of the most romantic of European cities — all this has made it an effort of the abstract mind to look on Rome as the historic capital; and as to the 'city of the soul,' one might as easily imagine it at Lyons, Milan, or indeed Chicago. And thus, the recent modernisation of Rome has destroyed the sense of historical continuity, that unique effect of Rome as 'mother of dead empires,' and all that Byron poured out with his passionate imagination and his scrambling rhymes. In the days of Byron, Goethe, and Shelley, as it had been in the days of Claude, of Piranesi, of Madame de Stael, and Gibbon, as it still was down to the days of Andersen, Hawthorne, and Browning, Rome was itself a poem: a sombre, majestic, most moving dirge — but an artistic whole — a poem. The Italian kingdom and modern progress have made it a capital up-to-date, with a most voluminous *Dictionary of Antiquities.*

But the new edition of the *Dictionary of Antiquities,* as edited by the House of Savoy, from 1870 to 1893, is immensely enlarged and almost rewritten. The brain may still recover more than the eye has lost. But it has become a strain on the imagination in the last decade of this century to revive in the mind's eye that historic continuity of the Eternal City, which till past the middle of this century was vividly presented even to the uninstructed eye. And the melancholy result is this — that Rome to-day is parcelled out into heterogeneous and discordant sections, which of old were simply impressive contrasts in the same picture; and they who visit Rome with some special interest find nothing to attract them to the rival interests and the antagonistic worlds.

They who go to Rome for the same reasons that they go to Paris or Vienna, see little at Rome more than in any other European capital, unless it be a few masses of ruins, and some enormous palaces and churches. The scholar and the antiquarian buries himself in museums, libraries, or excavations; and to-day it hardly strikes him at all that he is in the palpitating heart of Christendom, or that he is passing blindfold amidst some of the most poetic scenes in the world. Of old this pathos and charm pierced even the dullest pedant's heart; but now, with avenues, tram-cars, electric lighting, and miles of American hotels, he does not notice in modern Rome the rare glimpses of mediæval Rome. And the Catholic pilgrim is so hot with rage and foreboding that to ask him to acknowledge either beauty or interest outside the cause of the Vatican, is a heartless mockery of all that he holds highest. And thus Rome, which to our fathers had the soothing effect of a Mass by Palestrina or a glowing sunset after storm, now fills us with the sense of deadly passions, coarse desecration of what man has long held sacred, the incongruous mixture of irreconcilable ideas and mutual scorn. Bruno and Mazzini jostle Loyola and the *Bambino.* Tramways and iron bridges override basilicas and temples.

It is all the more needful then for those who love the great historic cities and their lessons to strive against the sectional aspects of Rome and to insist on its historic unity, in spite of the ravages of modern progress. Many, of course, will still go to Rome for its picnics or the court balls of Queen Margherita, to hunt the fox or to pick up a curio, to copy a manuscript or a Guido, to catch a glimpse of the Pope, or to crawl up the *Scala Santa.* But the truth remains that, for those who have eyes to see, the pre-eminence of Rome as a city consists in the combination and succession of all its varied interests. And although the continuity of its history is now far less directly conspicuous, and although on the surface Rome has now been promoted (or degraded) to the level of any other European capital, the record of the past is becoming far richer and more legible for those who with patience continue to read it; and it is still possible to forget ambitious municipalism and the pandemonium or the jerry-builder, even whilst accepting the mosaics and the bronzes their workmen have turned up, and the walls of the kings which they have laid bare and pierced.

The various interests all group themselves under three heads: the Rome of antiquity, the Rome of the Church, the Rome of poetry, romance, architecture, painting, sculpture, music. Down to the middle of this century, these were blended unconsciously into a certain harmony; and it was the mysterious unison of these separate chords which has inspired so much poetry and art from the age of the *Farnesina* down to that of *Transformation.* Since the middle of the century and the tremendous events of 1849, it has been an effort of the imagination to catch the harmony rather than discord. And in the last twenty years, since the entrance of the king of Italy, the effort has become year by year more difficult. But with patience it may still be done. And we may yet venture to plead for Rome that, shorn as she is of her old unique magic and power, she remains still the greatest historical school in the world, and has not even yet descended to the level of Nice or Hombourg.

The visible record of antiquity is continuous for at least a thousand years — indeed between the Column of Phocas and the earliest tombs we may possibly count an interval far longer. For five centuries at least, down to the final completion of the Rome of the East, Rome of the West was the spot where the whole force of the ancient world was concentrated—its wealth, its art, its science, its material, intellectual, and moral power. This planet has never witnessed before or since such concentration on one spot of the earth as took place about the age of Trajan, and let us trust it will never witness it again. From the Clyde to the Euphrates, from the Caucasus to the Sahara, the earth was ransacked for all that was pleasant, beautiful, or useful, whether in the produce of nature or in the arts of man. And it was flung down together on the banks of the Tiber with a wild profusion and with a lavish magnificence which has never been equalled, though sometimes imitated.

To that dazzling world of power, beauty, luxury, and vice, there succeeded the Christian Church with its fifteen centuries of unbroken organic life. This—far the longest and most important movement in the history of mankind—yet forms but one element in the history of the Eternal City, and the one element which to most Protestant tourists is the least conspicuous, if not almost forgotten. But the succession of spiritual empire to the inheritance of temporal empire in Rome is perhaps of all phenomena in history the most fascinating and the most profound, with its subtle analogies and infinite contrasts, with its sublime profession of disdain and its irresistible instinct for adaptation, its savage spirit of destruction combined with an unconscious genius of imitation. For the Church took the classical form for its model, and ended by setting it up as a revelation, even whilst engaged in cursing it in words and demolishing it in act.

That New Birth of free life which we call Humanism, or the Revival, or Renascence, was soon drawn towards Rome, and indeed for a time had its inspiration from the Papal world itself. Though Rome was not its birthplace nor in any sense its natural home, yet Rome drew to herself the Tuscan and Lombard genius as she had drawn the Attic and the Alexandrian genius to her before; and thus Rome became at last the great theatre for the Renascence, the stage whence its most potent influence over Europe was manifested and shed abroad. Not that any Roman approached in genius the great Florentines or Venetians, or that Rome was at any time so noble a school of imagination as Florence or Venice, or even

Siena or Verona. But the vast resources collected in Rome, the fabulous power of her great ecclesiastics, and the central and European position she held, made Rome for some three centuries one of the main adopted cradles of the Renascence. And if we include all the work and influence of Bramante, Michael Angelo, Raffaelle, Bembo, Cellini, Palestrina, Guido, Bernini, the architecture, the painting, the sculpture, the mosaics, the engraving, the drama, the music, the scholarship, the poetry, Rome must be counted as the most influential centre of the Renascence.

It was not effected by native Romans, nor was it the offspring of a local school. Much of its influence was meretricious, and much of it was essentially debasing. But it governed, by its evil as much as by its strength, the thought of Europe; and if we take the whole range of art, thought, and culture, Rome became at last its most prolific, most active, and most varied centre. Rome was the destined resort of artists in all fields for some five hundred years, from Giotto to Mozart, and the magic of Rome as an artistic paradise has hardly yet passed away in Europe. Nay, if we consider the vast influence over all subsequent building and all subsequent painting of St. Peter's Church and Raffaelle's designs, and of church ceremonial and music, of the classical mania and of romantic poetry, if we add such minor influences as those of Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Metastasio, Piranesi, Winckelmann, Niebuhr, Canova, and Thorvaldsen, we see at once how largely Rome has been the clearing-house for the popularisation of art in the last three centuries.

Much of it was artificial, theatrical, and feeble. But historically its development is curiously full of interest, as its influence over the modern mind has been almost without a limit. Why do Catholic worshippers from Warsaw to Cadiz, in Santiago, in Mexico, or Manilla, admire churches with a rococo jumble of gilded domes and pirouetting saints? Because the great *cinque-cento* artists built up St. Peter's as we see it to-day; and Jesuit demagogues developed that type into the gilt *pot-pourri* which attracts the ignorant Catholic in every corner of the planet. Florence was doubtless the birthplace and nursery of Renascent art. But directly that the Renascence was captured and transformed by Jesuitism, Rome became its official seat. And in the evolution of human art, there is no record more instructive than that still stamped on the churches and palaces of the Eternal City.

The Rome of antiquity, the Rome of the Church, the Rome of modern art are indeed three separate worlds; and it is their contrast, their juxtaposition, their curious blending of mutual hate and mutual reaction, which forms the most instructive page of all history. Each of the three worlds may be seen in a more intense form elsewhere. The valley of the Rhone and the shores of the Adriatic have still a greater mass of imperial remains than the city itself. The Apennine hill towns, and perhaps mediæval Paris, have a truer record of the Church. And Florence is the true cradle of modern art. But in Rome all three are combined, and their continual reaction, one on the other, is matter for inexhaustible thought.

Rome, as a city, is thus a visible embodiment, type, or summary of human history, and, in these days of special interests or tastes, the traveller at Rome too often forgets this world-wide range and complexity. To the scholar the vast world of Christian Rome is usually as utter a blank as to the Catholic pilgrim is the story of Republic and Empire. To the artist both are an ancient tale of little meaning, though the words are strong. He who loves 'curios' is blind too often to the sunsets on the Campagna. And he who copies inscriptions is deaf to the music of the people in the Piazza Navona, or the evening Angelus rung out from a hundred steeples. All nations, all professions, all creeds jostle each other in Rome, as they did in the age of Horace and Juvenal; and they pass by on the other side with mutual contempt for each other's interests and pursuits. But to the historical mind all have their interest, almost an equal interest, and their combination and contrasts form the most instructive lesson which Europe can present.

We have had whole libraries about Rome pictorial, Rome ecclesiastical, Rome artistic, Rome antiquarian; about classical, mediæval, papal, cinque-cento, rococo, modern Rome. There is still room for a book about the city of Rome as a manual of history; about the infinite variety of the lessons graven on its stones and its soil; about its contrasts, its contradictions, its immensity, its continuity; the exquisite pathos, the appalling waste, folly, cruelty, recorded in that roll of memories and symbols. Such a book would gather up the thoughts which, as he strolls about the Eternal City, throng on the mind of every student of human nature, and of any historian who is willing to read as one tale the history of man from the Stone Age down to Pope Leo XIII.

Of all places on earth, Rome is the city of contrasts and paradox. Nowhere else can we see memorials of such pomp alongside of such squalor. The insolence of wealth jostles disease, filth, and penury. Devoutness, which holds whole continents spell-bound, goes hand in hand with hypocrisy and corruption. What sublime piety, what tender charity, what ideal purity, what bigotry, what brutality, what grossness! Over this convent garden pensive mysticism has thrown a halo of saintliness: it is overshadowed by a palace which has one black record of arrogance. There, some tomb breathes the very soul of spiritual art;

beside it stands another which is a typical monument of ostentation. Here is a fragment worthy of Praxiteles, buried under costly masses of rococo inanity. Works that testify to stupendous concentration of power stand in a chaos which testifies to nothing but savagery and ruin. The very demon of destruction seems to have run riot over the spot that the very genius of beauty has chosen for his home.

The eternal lesson of Rome is the war which each phase of human civilisation, each type of art, of manners, of religion, has waged against its immediate predecessor: — the fury with which it sought to blot out its very record. When Rome became Greek in thought, art, and habits, it destroyed almost every vestige of the old Italian civilisation which was the source of its own strength; and recent excavations alone have unearthed the massive walls, the pottery, bronze and gold work of the ages before Rome was, and also of the ages of Servius, Camillus, and Cincinnatus. Imperial Rome pillaged Greece, Asia, Africa, and heaped up between the Quirinal and the Vatican priceless treasures of an art which it only understood well enough to covet and to rob. When the Gospel triumphed over Imperial Rome, it treated the palaces of the Cæsars as dens of infamy, and their monuments as blasphemous idols and offences to God. When the Anti-Christian Revival was in all the heyday of its immoral rage after beauty, it treated the Catholicism of the Middle Ages as a barbarous superstition. Popes and cardinals destroyed more immortal works of beauty than the worst scourges of God; and the most terrible Goths and Vandals that the stones of Rome ever knew were sceptical priests and learned *virtuosi*. Nay, in twenty years the reformers of the Italian kingdom have wrought greater havoc in the aspect of Papal Rome than, in the four centuries since

Julius II., popes and cardinals ever wrought on Classical and Mediæval Rome.

At every turn we come on some new crime against humanity done by fanaticism or greed. Into Imperial Rome there was swept, as into the museum of the world, the marbles, the statues, the bronzes, the ivories, the paintings and carvings, the precious works of human genius for some six or seven centuries — everything of rarity and loveliness that could be found between Cadiz and the Black Sea. There were tens of thousands of statues in Greek marble, and as many in bronze; there were marble columns, monoliths, friezes, reliefs, obelisks, colossi, fountains. Halls, porticos, temples, theatres, baths, were crowded with the spoils of the world, rich enough to furnish forth ten such cities as London, Paris, or New York. It is all gone. There are but a few fragments now that chance has spared. Twenty sieges, stormings, pillages, a hundred conflagrations, the barbarous greed of the invading hordes, the barbarous fanaticism of the first Christians, the incessant wars, revolutions, riots, and faction fights of the Middle Ages, the brutal greediness of popes, cardinals, their nephews and their favourites — worst of all, perhaps, modern industrial iconoclasm — have swept away all but a few chance fragments.

In the time of Pliny there must have been still extant thousands of works of the purest Greek art of the great age. There is now not one surviving intact in the whole world; and there are but two — the *Hermes* of Olympia and the *Aphrodite* of Melos — of which even fragments remain in sufficient preservation to enable us to judge them. Every other work of the greatest age is either, like the Parthenon relics, a mere ruin, or is known to us only by a later imitation. Of the bronzes not a single complete specimen of the great age survives. And this loss is irreparable. Even if such genius of art were ever to return to this earth again, it is certain that the same passion for physical beauty, the same habit of displaying the form, can never again be universal with any civilised people. And thus by the wanton destructiveness of successive ages, one of the most original types of human genius has become extinct on this earth, even as the mastodon or the dodo are extinct.

But masterpieces of marble and bronze were dross in comparison with the masterpieces of the human soul, of intellect, purity, and love, that have been mangled on this same spot and in sight of these supreme works of genius. The Christian pilgrim from some Irish or American monastery, from Santiago in Chile, from Armenia or Warsaw — the Catholic missionary on his way to die in China, or Polynesia, or Uganda — prostrates himself in the dust where Paul was beheaded and Peter crucified, where Gregory and Augustine prayed, and in the Colosseum he sees nothing but a monstrous black ruin; but he kneels in the arena where the blood of martyrs was poured forth like water, which has witnessed such heroic deaths, such revolting crimes. Each zealot — Catholic, Protestant, or sceptic — remembers only his own martyrs. Romans massacred Gaul and Goth; Polytheists martyred Christians; Papal creatures tortured Republicans, Protestants, and Reformers; emperors' men slew popes' men, and popes' men slew the emperors' men; Colonnas and Orsinis, Borgias and Cencis, Borgheses and Barberinis have poured out blood upon blood, and piled up crime on crime, till every stone records some inhuman act, and witnesses also to courage and faith as memorable and quite as human.

The fanaticism of these same priests and missionaries has its own reaction. As the Catholic pilgrim to-day prostrates himself on the spot where for eighteen centuries

Christian pilgrims from all parts of the earth have prostrated themselves, the followers of Garibaldi and Mazzini glare on them with hatred and contempt; so that, but for soldiers and police, no priest in his robes would be safe in Rome. The death-struggle between Papacy and Free Thought was never more acute. Hundreds of churches are bare, deserted, without the semblance of a congregation. Of late years, one may visit famous churches, known throughout the Catholic world, and find one's self, for hours together, absolutely alone; and sometimes we may notice how they serve as the resort of a pair of lovers, who choose the church as a place to meet undisturbed in perfect solitude. Vast monasteries, which for centuries have peopled Christendom with priests and teachers, are now empty, or converted to secular uses. The Pope is 'the prisoner of the Vatican,' and the Papal world has withdrawn from public view.

Nowhere else in the world are we brought so close face to face with the great battles of religion and politics, and with the destruction wrought by successive phases of human civilisation. This destruction is more visible in Rome, because fragments remain to witness to each phase; but the destruction is not so great as elsewhere, where the very ruins have been destroyed. At Paris, Lyons, London, York, Cologne, and Milan, the Roman city has been all but obliterated, and the mediæval city also, and the Renascence city after that; so that, for the most part, in all these ancient centres of successive civilisations, we see little to-day but the monotony of modern convenience, and the triumphs of the speculative builder. But at Rome enough remains to remind us of the unbroken roll of some three thousand years.

At Rome we *see* the wreckage. At Paris and London it has been covered fathoms deep by the rising tide.

They are finding now the tombs, arms, ornaments, and structures of the primitive races who dwelt on the Seven Hills before history was. We may now see the walls which rose when the history of Rome began, the fortress of the early kings, and their vast subterranean works. We can still stand on the spot where Horatius defended the bridge, and where Virginius slew his daughter. We still see the tombs and temples, the treasure-house of the Republic. We see the might and glory of Rome when she was the mistress of the world and the centre of the world. We see the walls which long defied the barbarians of the North; we see the tombs of the Christian martyrs, and trace the footsteps of the great Apostles; we see the rise, the growth, the culmination and the death-struggles of the Catholic Papacy. We see the Middle Ages piled up on the ruins of the ancient world, and the modern world piled on the ruins of the mediæval world. At Rome we can see in ruins, fragments, or, it may be, merely in certain sites, spots, and subterranean vaults, that revolving picture of history, which elsewhere our modern life has blotted out from our view.

Take the Pantheon — in some ways the central, the most ancient, the most historic building in the world. For more than 1900 years it has been a temple — first of the gods of the old world, and since of the Christian God. It is the only great extant building of which that can now be said. It is certainly the oldest building in continuous use on earth, for it was a temple of the pagan deities one hundred years before the preaching of the Gospel at Rome; dedicated by the minister and son-in-law of Augustus in the first splendour of the Empire; converted after six centuries into a Christian church and burial-place, when it was filled with the bones of the martyrs removed from the catacombs. The festival of All Saints thereupon instituted is the one Christian festival which modern scepticism concurs in honouring. In the Revival, the Pantheon became the type of all the domed buildings of Europe — first as the parent of the dome of Florence, thence of the dome of St. Peter's, through St. Peter's of our own St. Paul's, and so the parent of all the spherical domes of the Old and the New World. As such a type, it was the especial study of the humanist artists of the Revival, and so perhaps it was chosen for the tomb of Raphael. There, amidst a company of painters, scholars, and artists, his sacred ashes lie in perfect preservation; and but lately he has been joined in death by the first king of United Italy, who lies in a noble monument, round which Catholic and Liberals are still glaring at each other in hate. Plundered by Christian emperors, plundered by popes and cardinals, the Pantheon still remains, to my eyes, the most impressive, original, and most perfect building extant.

Imagine the Pantheon in its glory, before it was stripped of its gold, its bronze, marbles, and statues by emperors and popes. Conceive that vast, solid dome, still the largest span in the world — nearly one half more than the diameter of St. Paul's — the first great dome ever raised by man, the grand invention of Romans, of which the Greeks in all their art never dreamed. The dome, with the round arch out of which it sprang, is the most fertile conception in the whole history of building. The Pantheon became the parent of all subsequent domes, and so of that of The Holy Wisdom at Constantinople, which was the parent of the Byzantine oblate domes of Europe and of Asia.

We can recall to the mind's eye its roof of solid concrete, moulded and plated within, and covered with gilt bronze plates without; with its statues, the enormous columns of rare marbles and granite, its upper story of porphyry and serpentine, lit only by one great circle thirty feet in diameter, through which the open sky by day and the stars by night look down on the marble pavement. To this wonderful building, the one relic of the ancient world in its entirety, the builders of all after ages turned. For five centuries the Roman world turned to it; till out of it arose a new art in Constantinople. Then in the fifteenth century at the Revival the humanist artists turned again to this same great work; it gave rise first to the dome of Florence, and then one hundred and fifty years later, to the dome of St. Peter's; from St. Peter's the dome spread over the world — the *Panthéon* and the *Invalides* at Paris, St. Paul's in London, the Capitol at Washington, the Isaac Church at St. Petersburg are mere imitations of St. Peter's. And thus from the Pantheon has sprung the architecture which from Chile to Chicago, from the British Islands to the Turkish Empire, from St. Petersburg to Sicily, is seen in a thousand varieties, and in ten thousand examples.

But it is not the Pantheon, nor indeed any ancient temple, which served as the original type for the Gothic churches of Europe down to the ascendency of the Petrine type at the end of the sixteenth century. Nothing in the history of architecture is better established than the evolution of the Gothic Cathedral out of the civil basilicas of the ancient world. The whole course of that evolution can be traced step by step at Rome, in Santa Maria Maggiore, St. Paul's without the walls, St. John Lateran, St. Clement's, St. Agnes', St. Lawrence, and the older churches of the basilican type. Thus with the basilicas, extant, converted, or recently destroyed, as the matrix of the Gothic churches from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, and the Pantheon as the matrix of the neo-classical churches from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, we feel ourselves at Rome in the head-waters from which we can trace the flow of all modern architecture.

If the Pantheon be historically the central building in Rome, it is by no means amongst the oldest monuments. Nor are the walls of *Roma quadrata*, nor the first structures of the Palatine. The Egyptian obelisks carry us back to a time almost as remote from the Pantheon as the Pantheon is from us. The oldest, perhaps, date from the Pharaohs who built the Pyramids, and they were made to adorn the temple of the Sun on the banks of the Nile, thence were brought by the first Cæsars to adorn a circus, or to give majesty to a mausoleum, then thrown down and cast aside in Christian ages as monuments of heathendom and savage shows. Again they were restored in the classical revival after a thousand years of neglect, and set up to witness to the pride of popes and adorn the capital of Christendom.

What an epitome of human history in those vast monoliths, the largest of which is thirty-six feet higher than Cleopatra's needle on the Thames, and is more than three times its weight; for a thousand years witnessing the processions of Egyptian festivals, then for some centuries witnesses of the spectacles and luxury of the Imperial city, then for a thousand years cast down into the dust, but too vast to be destroyed, and then set up again, with the blessings of popes and the ceremonies of the Church, crowned with the symbol of the Cross, to witness to the grandeur of the successor of St. Peter. They have looked down — these eternal stones — on Moses and Aaron, on Pharaohs and Greeks and Persians, on Alexander and Julius, on Peter and Paul, on Charlemagne and Dante, on Michael Angelo and Raphael. These stones were venerable objects before history began; they have been objects of wonder to the three great religions, three races, and three epochs of civilisation.

One can forgive destructive municipalism much for at last rescuing from ignoble uses the burial-places of the Cæsars. There are no edifices in Rome more interesting to the historian than those vast mausolea — the grandest and most imposing tombs that exist — the mausoleum of Augustus, that of Hadrian, of Cæcilia Metella, the Pyramid of Cestius. That of Augustus, for a hundred years the burial-place of the Cæsars and their families, then a castle of the Colonnas, the scene of endless civil wars, afterwards a common theatre for open-air plays, is now at last recovered, to be preserved as a monument of antiquity. The yet vaster mausoleum of Hadrian, for another hundred years the burial-place of the later Cæsars, a huge tower of 240 feet in diameter, and rising to 160 feet in height; once a dazzling mass of statuary, marble, columns, bronze and gilding; then a fortress that bore the brunt of countless sieges, the citadel of the popes, their prison-house, their refuge, and their treasure-house, adorned with frescoes by pupils of Raphael, and famous in the anecdotes of Cellini, with cells, halls, and chambers crowded with anecdotes: at last a barrack of the Pope and then of the King of Italy.

This too, as one of the buildings of antiquity which has been in use continuously since the Empire, witnesses at once to the grandeur of the Cæsars, to the tempest-tossed history of Rome in her Decline and Fall, to the robber bands of the Middle Ages, to the infamies of the Papacy of the tenth century and of the sixteenth century. The history of Rome from Theodoric to Victor Emmanuel, the sieges, the wars of the popes, the whole story of their temporal power, seem to group round the Castle of the Angel who stayed the Pestilence at the prayers of St. Gregory. Within it was the porphyry sarcophagus which once held the dust of Hadrian. Strange is the story of that stately coffin. After a thousand years it was carried off to St.

Peter's by Innocent II. for his own body, and it was burnt in a conflagration two centuries later. The porphyry lid of it was used in the tenth century for the coffin of the Emperor Otho II. Seven centuries later his ashes were ejected by a pope, and it was converted into the baptismal font of St. Peter's, where it now rests. What an epitome of the history of Rome! This precious marble of the East, made to cover the dust of the Roman master of the world in the grandest tomb of Europe, desecrated and cast aside by barbarous invaders, one half of it was used as his coffin by the Emperor the successor of Charlemagne, the other is adopted for his own coffin by the Pope, the friend and *protégé* of St. Bernard. This half is destroyed by fire; the other half is still the font in the central Church of Christendom. The Empire of the Cæsars, the Empire of Charlemagne, the mediæval Papacy, the modern Papacy, all are recorded in that historic marble.

In spite of disfigurement, the recent 'improvements' have rather accentuated that peculiar quality of the monuments of Rome, that they thus witness to the successive revolutions in human destiny. The antiquarian who excavates in the valley of the Nile, the Seine, or the Mississippi, the geologist who explores in the strata of some estuary, comes upon layer after layer of successive ages, the remains of historic ages, then of pre-historic ages, of the bronze age, of the bone implements, of the flint implements, the neolithic, and the palæolithic age, until he comes to the glacial epoch, and so forth. That is the character of the Roman remains. With us Stonehenge records the Druids and nothing else, the White Tower records the Norman Kings, the Abbey the Plantagenets, St. Paul's the Stuarts, and no more. But at Rome each monument bears visible marks of four, five, or six successive ages over some two thousand years or a yet longer span.

St. Peter has displaced Trajan on his column, as St. Paul has superseded Antoninus. The Mamertine prison was first perhaps an Etruscan waterwork of the early kings, then the state prison of the Republic, the scene of the execution of Jugurtha, and the conspirators of Catiline, of Vercingetorix, and many another captive chief, of Sejanus; then it was believed to be the prison of St. Paul and St. Peter, from whence their last epistles were written, and since then it has become for the Catholic world a centre of pilgrimage, adoration, and miracle. So the churches round the Forum are partly formed of Roman temples and basilicas, one of them being the seat of the Senate. So the Colosseum was built by Titus after the capture of Jerusalem, largely by captive Jews; for three centuries it continued the scene of the most amazing and wonderful spectacles the world ever saw; then it was a fortress of the feudal barons, the refuge or the terror of popes, then the quarry from which cardinals and families of popes built their palaces, then a deserted ruin, then a factory, next a sacred place of pilgrimage, of preaching, and of reverential worship, and now again secularised into a mere antiquarian museum, from which Nature and God have been driven as with a pitchfork. So, too, out of one vast hall in the Baths of Diocletian, Michael Angelo constructed for a pope a stately modern church. The columns, the marble floors, the sarcophagi, the fonts, and the pulpits in the older churches have each a long and varied history. A column of Grecian marble has been oddly inscribed, 'From the bed-chamber of the Cæsars.' A sculptured coffin first held a Roman senator, was next converted to the use of a martyred saint, was then cast aside as a worthless bit of stone on a heap of rubbish, and at length appropriated by an æsthetic churchman for his own pompous monument.

There is one feature of Rome which even the rage of 'improvement' has spared as yet — the feature which of all others is the most suggestive to the historical mind — the ancient city walls: the whole series of walls, with their towers, gates, ramparts, and barbicans, with the twelve miles of circuit, the fragments of the early kings, the walls of Romulus and of Servius, the walls of Aurelian and of Belisarius and Theodoric, the walls of Pope Leo, of Pope Sixtus, of Urban, of Pio Nono. What a vast procession of events has passed in the sixteen centuries since Aurelian made the circuit that we see! As we stand on those ramparts in the Pincian or in the Medici garden, or beside the Lateran Terrace, or near the grave of Shelley, what visions we may still recall — what victorious armies from east and west, north and south, coming home in triumph under Diocletian and Constantine, Julian and Theodosius, with the eagles glancing in the sun, and the legionaries tramping on in serried ranks; what hordes of northern and southern invaders, Vandals, Goths, Lombards, Franks, Normans, and Saracens, the ever victorious armies of Charles the Great, of the Othos, of the Norman Guiscard; what battles; what sackings and conflagrations; or again, what long processions of pilgrims from all parts of the earth; what bands of monks led by Francis, Dominic, Loyola, and Xavier; what companies of men-at-arms led by Colonnas, Orsinis, Frangipanis, Contis, and Crescentii; and then in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries what clash of arms, what pompous ceremonies, what historic meetings, down to the time of Napoleon and Garibaldi, and Pio Nono and Victor Emmanuel, and the latest breach of all, through which the Italian kingdom entered and displaced the Pope. These walls and gates, themselves of all ages, bear stamped on them the history of Europe during sixteen centuries. Few edifices of man's hand on this earth have a record so great, and of such central interest.

Of the Catholic memorials of Rome, though the Church has almost disappeared from sight, nothing is destroyed and little is changed. To the Protestant tourist, with his Murray and his Baedeker, now that the public papal ceremonies have practically ceased, this Catholic world is for the most part a blank. He passes from the Cæsars to Raphael and Michael Angelo, Bernini and Guido, from the Forum to St. Peter's according to his taste, without a thought of the vast world of history, of legend, of poetry, of art, of religion, that fills up the twelve centuries between the days of Constantine and the days of Leo x. The British tourist is but one out of many. To the tens of thousands of Catholic pilgrims who visit Rome from all parts of the world, this city of St. Peter is all in all; ruins and pictures to them are worldly trifles. To them Christian Rome is everything, and heathen Rome and modern Rome are less than nothing. And to the impartial mind of history, this Christian Rome is a very solid third part — nay, perhaps, a real half of Rome — historic Rome in its entirety.

But it is a thorny topic to the mere historian, is this Christian Rome; for every corner of its story is encrusted with vague legend, unsupported guesses, usually passing into palpable imposture. Miracle, tradition, superstition, and fraud have got inextricably woven into the texture of each record. As the tourist mocks at the footprints of the Apostles in the Mamertine rock, at the miraculous Bambino of Ara Cœli; so the learned antiquary shakes his head at the sacred image of St. Peter, and at the tomb and cell of St. Cecilia. But the scepticism of tourist and antiquarian are somewhat overdone. There *is* a legendary, perhaps a fraudulent, element in many of the lives and martyrdoms, nay, in most of them. Strict historical criticism can accept no one in its entirety. But there is a vast substructure of fact, most difficult to disentangle, and impossible now to prove. For my part, I would as soon believe that nothing of the Golden House of Nero still exists under the Baths of Titus, that no fragment of *Roma quadrata* remains embedded in the palaces of the Cæsars, as I would believe that the legends of St. Clement and St. Lawrence, of Cecilia and Agnes, of Martina and Bibiana, were mere poetic inventions with no basis of fact. It is for the historical mind a hopeless task to analyse this element of fact; and where superstition has piled up fables, and scepticism retorts with wholesale ridicule, a lifetime would hardly suffice to separate truth and fiction.

Let us, then, be content to grope in the labyrinthine passages and silent vaults of the catacombs, to view the mouldering bones in their narrow cribs, the lamps, and circlets, and fragments of pottery and metal, the rude and smoky frescoes, the inscriptions, the epitaphs, the emblems of the faith; let us descend into the lower churches of St. Clement and St. Agnes and St. Lawrence, St. Cosmas, and St. Martina; let us visit the baptistry and cloisters of the Lateran, even the *Scala Santa* and the crypt of St. Peter's; let us ponder over S. Gregorio and its remains of the great Gregory, S. Sabina, with its record of Dominic and Aquinas; let us meditate in the convent gardens of the Esquiline and the Aventine, and feel that we are truly in touch with scenes historically consecrated by some of the greatest souls who have ever dignified humanity, with spots hallowed as some of the turning points in human civilisation, and certainly consecrated by the tears and prayers of believers during eighteen centuries. We neither surrender our critical judgment nor give way to a ribald scepticism. What parts of this mighty and pathetic pageantry of Christian legend are real, and what parts are pious fiction or unholy fraud, we cannot tell. Let us forbear to probe further where the task is vain. But this we know: that in that enormous mass of legend, relic, ceremonial, tradition and art, there is a basis of profound reality, and a world of imagery, emotion, sacrifice, such as man's brain and heart have never surpassed.

It is a melancholy reflection how often our critical and sceptical habits make us blind to the true historic significance of such a monument as St. Peter's. The tourist and the student of art decry its rococo saints and extravagant pomposity, the waste of power, the manifest hollowness of its peculiar relics. Put aside antiquarian and æsthetic criticism, and still a marvellous record remains. Grant that the *Cathedra Petri*, the miraculous bronze image and the bones of the Apostle, the column at which Christ was scourged, are all pious fictions, there remains still in the very site, in the tombs of the early Leos, of Matilda, the great countess, in the antique Madonnas, in the font, in the crypt and subterranean vaults, in the sacristy and the cemetery of Constantine, in the tomb of Junius Bassus, and in the Navicella of Giotto, above all, in the long annals of that venerated spot from the circus of Nero down to its final consecration by Urban VIII., enough to fill the thirteen centuries between Constantine and the Borgheses.

To visit Rome — which even in the last generation had on most minds a sobering effect, as a visit to a cemetery must have, however beautiful be the spot where the departed sleep — has grown to be of mournful interest to those who remember it of old. There is to them a new meaning in the peasant's song, 'Roma, Roma, non è piu com' era prima!' We can see no longer the Salvator Rosa ruins and rocks, the Piranesi colonnades and arches, the quaint old Papal pageantry, and the pensive landscape from garden and terrace. Bits of it remain here and there amidst acres of building speculations and American caravanserais. But for the mere student of antiquity there is ample compensation. And it is perhaps the truth that the deepest interest of Rome still is not in its art, in its Vatican galleries, Sistine frescoes, or dome of St. Peter's, not in its churches, cloisters, relics, and tombs, but in its record of the ancient world. Rome never was a centre of art even in the days of Raphael, she never was a centre of Christianity even in the twelfth and the thirteenth century, as she was a centre of civilisation in the ages of Julius, Augustus, Vespasian, and Trajan.

We may still stand on the tower of the Capitol and survey that glorious panorama bounded by Tuscan, Sabine, and Alban hills, and dream what that scene was some seventeen or eighteen hundred years ago. The Forum below was one radiant avenue of temples, triumphal arches, triumphal columns, colossal statues, monuments, and votive shrines — the senate-house, the rostra, the sacred way on one side — the circular temple of Vesta, the temple of Castor, and the basilica of Julius on the other; above, on the right, the temple of Jove, on the left that of Juno, and the towering palaces of the Palatine and the Circus Maximus beyond the valley. Far as the eye can reach would be vast theatres, enormous baths, colossal sepulchres, obelisks, columns, fountains, equestrian statues in marble or in bronze. The walls of these sumptuous edifices are all of dazzling brilliance in Oriental marbles, bright with mosaic and with frescoes, and their roofs are covered with plates of hammered gold. In the far distance, across terraces and gardens shady with the dark foliage of cypress and stone pine, might be seen the aqueducts which bring from the mountains whole rivers into the city, to fill its thousand baths and its hundred fountains. And between the aqueducts and the porticoes, far as the eye can reach to the hills beyond, villas gleam in the sun with their terraces, gardens, statues, and shrines, each a little city in itself.

This earth has never seen before or since so prodigious an accumulation of all that is beautiful and rare. The quarries of the world had been emptied to find precious marbles. Forests of exquisite columns met the gaze, porphyry, purple and green, polished granite, streaked marbles, in the hues of a tropical bird, yellow, orange, rosy, and carnation, ten thousand statues, groups and colossi of dazzling Parian or of golden bronze, the work of Greek genius, of myriads of slaves, of unlimited wealth and absolute command. Power so colossal, centralisation so ruthless, luxury so frantic, the world had never seen, and we trust can never see again.

Strangely enough this portentous accumulation of riches and splendour lay open to all comers. The one thing that could not be seen (till the Empire was nearing its close) was a wall, a fortress, a defence of any kind. Rome of the Cæsars was as free from any military look as London to-day. It had neither wall nor citadel nor forts. It was guarded only by a few thousand soldiers and a few thousand police. For four centuries or so it flourished in all its glory. There followed some ten centuries of ruin, waste, desolation, and chaos, until its restoration began — a restoration sometimes that was a new and worse ruin. The broken fragments only can be seen to-day. Here and there a few mutilated columns, cornices, staircases, and pavements, the foundations of vast temples, theatres, and porticoes, the skeleton of a few buildings too vast to be destroyed, a few half-ruined arches, a number of broken statues in marble, and one complete in bronze, rescued because it was wrongly supposed to be a Christian sovereign. All else is dust and endless tantalising dreams. But that dust draws men to it as no other dust ever can. And he who begins to dream longs to dream again and again.

CHAPTER X.

IMPRESSIONS OF ATHENS.

On a recent visit to Athens, I was introduced to a beautiful and patriotic Athenian lady, the wife of an official of rank, who begged me to write about Athens on my return home (this, I may say, is an ordinary form of politeness in that capital). When I promised rather rashly that I would try to do something, she took my breath away by asking if I meant to write about ancient or modern Athens? This question did seem to me one of startling *naïveté;* and I helplessly replied that, whatever I said, should be about Athens — one and indivisible. My daring paradox was rewarded with a gracious smile.

My answer was, however, not at all so extravagant as at first sight might appear. It is true that of all cities of the world of any pretensions, Athens is the one of which the ancient history (and the ancient history of a very short period) is all absorbing. We all dream of having seen Athens, or dream of one day seeing Athens, for the sake of the overpowering memories of some two or three centuries at most. When we are at Athens, our eyes and our thoughts are filled with the sublime and up-soaring remnants of that brief epoch in the great age of the Republic. From that epoch until our own lifetime, the history of Athens, except for a few trivial scuffles and isolated notices, has been a mere blank, almost as much as if it had been another Pompeii buried under the dust of a volcano and recently disinterred.

But, within the last thirty or forty years, we may say, Athens has risen up out of its tomb : — not like Pompeii, dead, silent, deaf, and voiceless, but eagerly revivifying the city of Pericles after some 2300 years ; reproducing the language, the political habits, the names, the intellectual peculiarities, even the architecture and the tastes of the ancient city — rising up, like Lazarus, after all these centuries, talking and living, as if the death of twenty-three centuries had been a trance. This fact, however superficial and artificial it may be in many ways, however little the modern city can compare with the art and thought of the ancient city, is a striking fact psychological, social, and historical. And hence, there is a strong tendency to consider Athens as it is, even whilst studying what Athens was. At Rome, or at Alexandria, there is almost nothing but the stones and the sites, to remind one of the ancient people. At Athens, the first impression is a sort of serio-comic fancy revival of the old city. We stand in the *Forum* or the *Piazza Navona* at Rome without imagining that the cab-drivers or the fruit-sellers have anything in common with Coriolanus or Camillus. They do not speak the language, or use the names, or imitate the forms of the Republic. But as one walks along the ὁδὸς Ἑρμοῦ in full view of the Acropolis, or listens to Tricoupi addressing the δῆμος Ἀθηναῖος in the open air in a language which Thucydides could understand, and which he would have rejoiced to cast into stately epigrams, as we pass under the Doric colonnades, in dazzling Pentelic marble, of the Academy, and the Museum — it is difficult to be quite indifferent to the revival — as some say, the scenic revival — but, in any case, a most suggestive historical renascence. As Byron felt, as competent historians feel, it is impossible to be wholly blind to the living Athens of to-day.

My own two visits to Greece were too short to allow anything that can be called research, and these pages will aim at nothing but the recalling a few first impressions. When one arrives in Greece, the first thing that strikes us is that we have left Europe behind. It is true that Greece is not in Asia or in Africa, and hardly in the East ; but in spite of the maps, it is only conventionally in Europe. Greece is something between Europe and the East, with a certain dash of the South. The climate, the continuous blaze of the sun, the long months of complete drought, the dusty plains and dry water-courses, the aloes, the date palms, the cotton, the indigo, the current-grape, the jackal, the chamæleon, and the small crocodile — even the camel which has been seen in use — are Eastern and Southern rather than European. When we land in Greece, we find ourselves in the middle of the week before last, that is to say, they still use the Calendar of the Eastern Church, and are twelve days behind us in Europe. And in A.D. 1900 this will have become thirteen days, for in the West we shall omit that leap-year and gain another day. In Greece they talk of the post coming in from Europe, which it only does when a ship arrives, and they speak of European things, in the sense of foreign. In spite of the conventional statements of the geographers, Greece is not in Europe ; but a half-way house between Europe and Asia.

Another important fact, which the geographers ignore, is this — that Greece is an island for any practical purpose — or rather an interminable string of islands scattered along the Eastern Mediterranean over a space of sea that may measure some 500 miles, both north and south, east and west. The maps may show Greece as a prolongation of the Balkan Peninsula ; but it would not be practicable for an ordinary traveller to reach Greece except by sea. Athens, though it is a capital city of Europe, cannot be reached by the continental railways. The train will carry us direct from Calais to the furthest extremities of the Spanish, Italian, Austrian, Russian, and even Turkish dominions in Europe. But railways do not reach in the Balkan Peninsula south of Salonica, in Turkey. The Romans and the Turks had roads into Greece proper; but it is now unsafe, very fatiguing, and costly, to travel by land from Salonica to Athens, and nobody does so. Hence, practically, socially, politically, and economically speaking, Greece is an island, a vast cluster of islands placed in the Ægean Sea, very far East and very far South. Athens lies east of Poland and of Hungary. The whole of Greece lies south of Naples and Taranto; and Crete lies south of the Algerian coast and of any point of Europe.

We must go to Greece by sea: and the sea voyage is most instructive. There is a long, lonely, restless stretch of sea, some 400 miles broad between the coast of Sicily and sight of the mountains of Attica. When the vast pinnacle of Aetna, with its trailing pennon of smoke, a pinnacle which hour after hour seems to rise in the sky, at last fades out of sight in the west, a long reach of unbroken sea has to be ploughed. Long before we sight the mountains of Taygetus or the headlands of Tænarum or Malea, between which lies the vale of 'Hollow Lacedæmon,' one has come to realise that we have left Europe far behind and are entering on the land of the rising sun. The old saw ran — 'When you have passed Cape Malea, make your will and say farewell to your kindred.' That is no longer necessary or even prudent. But by the time that we have rounded Cape Malea and are steering north-east instead of south-east, it breaks upon us that we have left Europe some distance behind us.

Whatever geographers may pretend, there is not any such country as Greece — and there never was. There is no definitely marked portion of Europe inhabited by a people politically and socially one, with national traditions and habits. There is not now, and there never has been in ancient or in modern times. If we take a list of the illustrious Greeks of antiquity, we shall find that far the larger part of them belonged not to continental Greece proper, but to Greek communities spread out over the world from the coast of Spain to the banks of the Euphrates, from the Euxine to the coast of Africa. There is now a Greek language, a Greek church, a Greek nationality, possibly to some degree, but very doubtfully, a Greek race, spread over many countries, over a thousand islands, mingled with other races, languages, and countries ; subdivided, dispersed, and scattered over more than a thousand miles, though the population of the entire Greek kingdom is not half that of London. All good Greeks would be scandalised if Crete was not included in Greece — Crete where they say true Hellenes survive. And if Crete, why not Rhodes, why not Cyprus, why not Smyrna, Chios, Lesbos, and the other islands of the Archipelago ? Till Athens lately became populous, there were more Greeks in Constantinople than in Athens, and it is always said of a purer Hellenic descent. And no other Greek town except Athens and Piræus contains as many Greeks as there are in Smyrna, or Alexandria, perhaps in Trieste, or London. Where does Greece begin and end ? All genuine Greeks deny with indignation that Greece is limited by the present frontiers of the actual kingdom. What are its local limits ? Every true Hellene, and every Philhellene states them in a different way. A Greek orator addressing the people of Athens talks not of their country, but of *Hellenismus* or Panhellenism, that is, the common aspirations of the so-called Greek race. Greece may mean a nation ; it cannot mean a country.

Until we see Greece we hardly realise that Greece is practically all mountains, tremendous, bare, precipitous mountains, with hardly any real plains of any size except at extreme points. The islands are so numerous and so close to the mainland that they practically form part of it. They are mere tops of mountains rising out of the sea. And it is much easier to pass from one island to another, than from one point of the mainland to another a few miles off. In sailing across the Ægean Sea, from the time we sight Cape Tænarum (*Matapan*) until we reach the Bosphorus, some 500 miles, we never lose sight of mountains towering out of the sea. From Tænarum we can see the mountains of Crete 100 miles off; and in passing up the Archipelago, we see on one side the islands and mainland of Asia Minor on the East, and the islands and mainland of European Greece on the West. Hence, the whole of Greece, mainland and islands together, looks not like a definite country such as Italy, Spain, France, or England, but a long chain of Alps or Andes, half submerged in the Eastern Mediterranean, and thrusting a thousand bare and jagged peaks to form islands in the sea.

The mountains are themselves lofty; and since they are usually seen as if they rose straight up out of the sea, they look stupendous, even to eyes familiar with the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Apennines. The principal mountains in Greece are more than twice the height of Snowdon. Olympus, the loftiest of all, is more than twice the height of Ben Nevis with Arthur's Seat at Edinburgh on the top of that. The mountains which gird Athens round like a crown (Mr. Symonds thinks they form what the poet calls 'the crown of purple') are loftier than Snowdon and Ben Nevis, and yet they are all within a day's walk of the city. Thus from every point of view, Greece is not so much a country as a vast mountain chain half submerged in the sea. And owing to the multiplicity and height of the mountains, the small area in which they are concentrated, the singular transparency of the air, and the degree to which the land is indented and intersected by sea, Greece appears to be strangely small,—even smaller than it really is. It is hardly anywhere more than two hundred miles deep, or one hundred miles broad. So that from almost any elevated point, the greater part of Greece can be seen at once. Attica, the Peloponnesus, the Eastern islands, the mountains of Bœotia, Argolis, Arcadia and Eubœa, are all to be seen together. Attica is hardly bigger than the Isle of Wight, and infinitely less open to cultivation and transit. And ancient Athens would easily stand in the area of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

When we see it, we realise how small Greece is, in one sense; and yet how widely spread out over the Eastern Mediterranean. Continental Greece is merely one vast mountain mass, into whose lateral valleys and gorges the sea has forced a channel. And yet, in another sense, Greece with its interminable chain of rocky islets, from Corcyra to Crete, from Crete to the Propontis, seems to lead on in a continuous land for a thousand miles. The mainland is severed by nature into small segments, each hardly able by itself to feed a thousand families. All Attica can hardly grow as much food as a single great estate in England, France, or Russia. Eleusis, which Athens ultimately subdued and incorporated, is not so far from Athens as is Shepherd's Bush from Woolwich; and these famous towns are separated from each other by a steep and difficult mountain pass, which a regiment could hold against an army corps. Megara, which was a thorn in the side of Athens at the time of her imperial glory, was not much further from her than is Gravesend from London. Corinth, the deadly enemy of Athens, could be seen from the Acropolis. Ægina, which Themistocles so earnestly advised the Athenians to incorporate, looks as near to Athens as Harrow looks to Notting Hill; and a single oarsman might row himself across the gulf in any open boat.

The mighty statue in bronze of Athene Promachos, the famous work of Pheidias, which, with its pedestal, towered some sixty feet on the summit of the Acropolis, could be seen from the coast of Argolis or from any of the heights of Corinth, Megara, Ægina, or Bœotia. Thence they could behold Athene keeping watch night and day over her beloved city. One used to doubt if this famous image could escape the charge of obtrusive monstrosity which is the note of colossal statues. But when we stand on the spot, and remember how this resplendent figure of the Patron Goddess ever faced the enemies of Athens, as each sunrise and sunset tipped with golden fire the point of her spear and the crest of her helm, we may conceive how this Palladium sank into the popular imagination. And we see fresh meaning in the tale how, eight hundred years after the date of its erection, Alaric and his Goths had been scared from their raid on the Acropolis by the vision of the Goddess keeping ward over her city in arms.

As the traveller for the first time in his life sails up the Gulf of Ægina, and his straining eyes at last behold Attica and Athens, the impression is always the same. How magnificent is the amphitheatre in the centre of which stands the Acropolis; how majestic and upsoaring is the grandest of all ruins on its immortal steep; how incredibly near together are placed these mighty memorials and historic sites; how marvellously small is the stage on which these undying dramas were played! How sublime is ancient Athens in its loneliness: how infinitesimally small is the space it occupied on the earth!

The situation of Athens is far grander than that of Rome, or Florence, perhaps even that of Naples, and of any city in Europe except Constantinople, which is a wholly different thing. The nearness and the continuity of the mountain amphitheatre round Athens, the great height and grand form of the mountains, the splendid mass and elevation of the Acropolis in the centre, produce an impression more strange, simple, and imposing than any city of the West. From the distance at sea, what we behold is a vast ruin on a noble cliff. If we do not so much consider beauty and picturesque charm such as that of Naples, Palermo, Verona, and Venice, but mass, unity, and weight of stroke in the impression, we may well feel that in simple, and it may be almost painful, majesty, nothing in Western Europe can equal the first sight of Athens. And what a mere shelf of rock it looks, buttressed round by mountains on all sides but towards the sea! Like the rock of Gibraltar, Athens stands an imposing mass towering out of the sea, lonely, unapproachable by landward, and hardly habitable apart from the sea; suggesting at first sight far off empire across the sea, useless and unintelligible, except as the impregnable fastness of a sea-born race.

Attica itself is a mere rocky shelf opening down to the sea, but with nothing around it or behind it landwards, except jagged mountain peaks, defiles, and citadels held by her enemies and rivals. As we stand on the Propylæa and survey the magnificent panorama of rock, promontory, crags, gorges, and mountain ranges one beyond the other, rising into the sky, 5000, 6000, even 8000 feet, we are looking on soil trodden by the fiercest enemies of Athens in the days of her greatest strength, by Bœotians, Argives, Corinthians, Achæans, and Arcadians. An Athenian thus lived ever in full view of the home of his enemies, and could behold some of the most memorable scenes in his own history, and also the birthplace and the tombs of some of his most famous chiefs. The history of Athens, its triumphs and its weakness, had for its cradle one single rocky amphitheatre. And yet, as Comte has finely put it, it was easier for her to conquer a wide empire on the seas, than it was to subdue a neighbouring state within a day's march of her citadel. She could plant her trophies, her colonies, and her subject cities all over the Mediterranean, from Sicily in the West, to the Propontis on the North, and to Crete and Rhodes in the East; but she never could subdue many a petty republic, whose territory could be seen as the citizens climbed the great staircase to the shrine of Athene.

Let every traveller hasten to reach the top of Mount Pentelicus. It is loftier than Snowdon; but it is only some twelve miles from Athens, a morning walk for the average hill-climber. In the hollow which seems to lie beneath our feet, as we gaze on the wonderful scene from the summit, the Acropolis, with the Parthenon and Propylæa portico, dominate the basin of Athens. It is easy to mark the Pnyx where Themistocles and Pericles, Alcibiades and Demosthenes addressed the people; there is the *agora* where Socrates stood and questioned all who cared to answer; there is Mars' Hill where Paul spoke to philosophers and idlers about the Unknown God. One can almost make out the olive grove which still seems to mark the site of Plato's Academy, and not far from it the knoll which marks Colonos, the birthplace of Sophocles, the scene of his exquisite drama of the exiled Œdipus. In the two hundred years that sever the age of Pisistratus from that of Demosthenes, what a harvest of genius in all forms of human power — in war, art, poetry, policy, philosophy — has been gathered from that little field, which from our mountain top looks like a few bare, barren, sunbaked acres! What an outburst of human activity and invention in that dazzling light and purity of atmosphere, where, as their poet says, they passed their days 'in dainty delight, in most pellucid air,' or as our own poet has said —

> 'Where, on the Ægean shore, a city stands
> Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil —'

The atmosphere of Athens still seems to be *light* rather than *air*: its soil seems to be not earth, but the dust of white marble.

Still standing on Pentelicus, we may see a little further Piræus and the three ports beside the blue gulf, from whence some thousand fleets of triremes have set sail for all parts of the Mediterranean. And just across the thin streak of blue rises the island of Salamis. The water beneath it is the scene of the most famous sea-fight in history: beyond, the hills look down on the birthplace of Æschylus: in the distance rise up the crag of Acro-Corinth and the mountains of Argolis, Cithæron, Helicon, Parnes, and Hymettus. To the west and south, half Greece can be outlined, or traced by its topmost peaks and distant islands. If we turn northwards, beneath our feet, an hour or two on foot below us, lies a quiet, drowsy plain along the sea-coast, sheltered by the vast ranges of Eubœa. That quiet, drowsy plain is Marathon, where Greeks first met the Mede in arms in the great day of the Athenian glory. The tumulus still to be seen was always known as the sepulchre of the Athenian warriors. Along the reedy shore Æschylus and his brothers fought in the desperate embarcation of the Persians. And in the northern distance we see the mountains which tower above Thermopylæ. This union of magnificent scenery with so large a prospect over historic scenes, this vast panorama over the memorials of events commemorated in the greatest poetry and prose of the world, makes the view from Pentelicus live in the memory with that other prospect from the campanile of the Capitol at Rome.

The nearness of every one of these historic scenes, the infinitely petty stage which these immortal men of genius trod in life, the brief moment of human history into which they were crowded, takes away the breath. Here in a town of very moderate size and population, within the span of one human life, there lived and worked Miltiades, Themistocles, Pericles, Alcibiades, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Pheidias, Thucydides, Socrates, Plato, some of the most brilliant generals, statesmen, politicians known to universal history, the greatest tragic genius, the greatest comic genius, the supreme art genius recorded in the annals of mankind, the great master of philosophic history, two out of the three great chiefs of ancient philosophy. All of these were born and bred within walking distance of this unique spot, and all of them within little more than a hundred years. There is nothing like this in the whole history of mankind. Even in Florence, Giotto, Dante, Leonardo, Michael Angelo, and Galileo, were separated by nearly four centuries; and in Judæa, from Samuel to Ezekiel, we may possibly count some six centuries. It is this sudden blazing up of supreme genius on this mere speck of rock for one short period — and then utter silence — which makes the undying charm of this magic spot of earth.

What a light this throws on ancient history! As we stand on Pentelicus, with the Acropolis, Marathon, Salamis, Piræus, and Eleusis at our feet, we behold bays, plains, and hills, the dwellers wherein were ever strangers and enemies of Athens. No Megarian, no Argive, no Corinthian, no Bœotian, ever could become a citizen or share in the political and religious privileges of Athene.

Homer, Sappho, Pindar, Theocritus, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Archimedes, and Hipparchus were mere foreigners at Athens, aliens and sojourners amongst the lawful citizens. Let him cross that narrow streak of blue sea, and the Corinthian at Athens, or the Athenian at Corinth, was what the Parisian is at Berlin, or the Prussian in Paris. What would England be, if a Kent man were an alien in Essex, if, from the hill at Sydenham, the Londoner looked on a people with whom he could neither trade, nor worship, nor intermarry, nor hold civil or military relations? What, if from the dome of St. Paul's the Londoner looked down on the city wherein were born and passed their whole lives Alfred, Edward, Cromwell, Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Newton, and Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Wordsworth; if from Primrose Hill, he could look down on the fields of Azincourt and Blenheim, of Trafalgar and Waterloo. Now at Athens, the Athenian looked day by day on the home of his national heroes, on the scenes of his national glory, and the works of his greatest artists, and also on the frowning strongholds of his deadly enemies.

It requires an effort to bring home to the mind the small scale of ancient Athens. It does not seem within the old walls to have exceeded a square mile, about the area of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, and one-hundredth part of London. Out of this space, the Acropolis, wholly devoted to public buildings, the Areopagus, the Pnyx, and the Agora must have occupied at least one-tenth. But a few hundred acres, or the area of one of the large London parks, remained for private houses. These were mainly of wood and plaster, principally used at night. Of mansions for private citizens, of a permanent kind there is no vestige nor any reference in classical times. The normal population could hardly have exceeded 25,000 full citizens; and we cannot believe that the city and the ports together could ever have contained 200,000 souls, even counting slaves, strangers, women, and children.

Their whole life was public: their main life was spent in the open air. Their homes were shelters at night, with harems for the women and children. The climate of Athens is such that nothing to be called winter cold occurs between the end of February and the middle of December, and rain seldom falls between May and the end of October. We must imagine the Athenians of the great age as a very small class of free and privileged men, personally known to each other, living on terms of absolute equality, passing their lives in public, mainly in the porticoes, colonnades, temples, and market-places, having little serious work except in time of war, with strong civic patriotism, and intense local superstitions, lounging about with a noble sense of superiority like the officers of the guard in some military capital. They were educated in certain things and in certain modes beyond the wildest dream of modern culture, with all hard work committed to slaves, all cares of the household to women: passionately keen about grace, beauty, wit, and intellect. Their culture consisted of poetry, mythology, music, gymnastics, arithmetic, the art of conversation, infinite subtlety in the use of their own language, and abnormal sensitiveness to rhythm, grace of expression, wit, and all forms of beauty. So they lived daintily, as their poet said, in a balmy flood of light, surrounded by temples, statues, porticoes, shrines, and paintings, and at every corner of their city dominated by the radiant majesty of the Acropolis and its divine Guardian.

It is not easy to conceive the effect of a building of Pentelic marble in that atmosphere until one has seen it on the spot. But when we behold a new marble colonnade in that pellucid air, sparkling like the Silberhorn peak of the Jungfrau in the early morning light, we instantly comprehend the peculiarities of that style. A Doric pediment in London no more enables us to understand a temple at Athens than the bronze Achilles of Hyde Park recalls to us the Athene Promachos of Pheidias. The Vestry of the Church of St. Pancras in Euston Square is not more like the Erechtheum than the pediment of St. Martin's in the Fields is like the Parthenon. The British Museum, the only tolerable Greek building in London, looks somewhat as a Greek temple might look during the eruption of a volcano. Two thousand three hundred and twenty-five years have tinged the Parthenon and the Propylæa a deep orange or russet. But a new building of Pentelic marble in the sky of Athens stands out soft, white, and dazzling with light. In the modern edifices of new Athens, built from the same quarry, we see the pearly radiance of the marble, the need and the uses of colour, the repose and coolness of these spacious colonnades and that which has been the puzzle of antiquarians — the entire absence of *window*. We are quite unable to conceive buildings without windows: we cannot work windows into Greek designs. At Athens we see that a colonnade of Pentelic marble lights itself, and in the sweetest way. The marble is semi-transparent. It diffuses, reflects, and harmonises sunlight in so mysterious a manner that a marble hall is bathed in a subdued and delicious glow.

If we revive in imagination the Acropolis as it stood in its perfection, we see with new force the undoubted historic truth, that the Athenians, in spite of their restlessness, audacity, and individuality, were intensely conservative in ideas, slavishly superstitious about spiritual evils, and as St. Paul told them on Mars' Hill, too much bound by obsolete scruples. The condemnation to death of Socrates and of Aristotle, the extreme timidity of Aristotle's utterances, the panic about the Hermae, the mob-fury after the battle of Arginusae prove it historically. But it is equally patent in their art. It is obvious that a Doric temple was slowly developed out of a small shrine having beams and pillars of wood. The form was rigidly maintained when the material and the scale were changed; and, when temples were built of a vast size, they were still ornamented and designed on the old methods, however inapplicable these had become. As we stand beneath the peristyle and pediment of the Parthenon, we cannot fail to see that, in a building of those grand dimensions and towering position, the lovely frieze and even the majestic figures of the pediment, must have been sacrificed, so far as they never could be properly seen. Pheidias could not have been blind to this cruel result of antique convention. But neither he nor Pericles would have dared to transgress the sacred canons in which art was bound.

The superstitious bigotry of the Athenians appears in their history, their habits, their institutions, their language, and the uniformity of their architecture. Stand on the spot and recall the Acropolis in its glory, and you will feel that there must have been after all a profound monotony and rigidity in those eternal colonnades and unvarying architraves. The arch was unknown in the fine age; the temples were all built on one or two uniform patterns; it was left to Rome to develop all the uses of arch, tower, dome, the column supporting the arch, the successive stories, the hemicycle, and groined roof — all the intricate combinations which Rome suggested to modern architecture. Greece remained the slave of its traditions and canons of art. It is true that it avoided the incongruities and coarse realism of later Roman art. But it was left to Rome to make art progressive even in its corruption. Like the drama of Racine, Attic art remained perfect in its conventions. But its conventions were iron chains.

Accepting its traditional conventions, we cannot doubt that the Acropolis must have displayed in its splendour the most imposing mass of buildings ever raised by man. With Pheidias we feel in presence of the supreme artist (he was far more than sculptor) — the one perfect master in the history of art, of whose faultless genius no single side was weaker or less noble than the rest. He remains alone of men (or if not alone then it may be with Homer, Shakespeare, Mozart) one whose unerring instinct transmuted into beauty every form of the world around him.

There is one aspect of Attic art, and one of its most impressive types, which can be properly seen only in Athens itself. This is the monuments of the dead: of which many stand in the ancient cemetery of *Cerameicus*, and many are collected in the National Museum. In their pensive and exquisite pathos, in their reserve, in their dignity and human affection, in their manly simplicity — in frank, pure, social, and humane acceptance of death in all its pathos and all its solemnity, these Athenian monuments may be taken as the highest type of funeral emblems that the world possesses. They present an aspect of Death pensive, affectionate, social, peaceful, and beautiful. There is nothing of the ghastly and cruel symbolism of the Middle Ages, nothing of the stately and pompous mausoleums dear to Roman pride, nothing of the impersonal fatuity of our modern gravestones. The family group is gathered to take its last farewell of the departing. He or she is not stretched on a bed or bier, not sleeping, not wasted by sickness, not ecstatically transfigured. They sit or recline in all their health and beauty, sweetly smiling, as a loved one who is about to take a distant voyage. The family grouped around are thoughtful, serious, not sad, loving and tender, but not overcome with grief; they too take a long farewell of the traveller about to depart. At his feet lies a favourite dog, some bird or cherished pet, and sometimes in an obscure corner a little slave may be seen howling for his master. But only slaves are allowed to weep. Sometimes the young warrior is mounted on his steed, sometimes is seen charging in the midst of battle. But, for the most part, all is ideal beauty, peace, and love.

There is here no vain pomp, no arrogance of wealth and power, heraldic emblems, swords, coronets, and robes of state. Neither is there the horror or the ecstasy, the impossible angels, the grotesque demons, the skulls or the palm branches with which we moderns have been wont to bedizen our funeral monuments. It recalls to us our poet's *In Memoriam* — a work too of calm and ideal art — towards the latest phase of the poet's bereavement. It seems as if the sculptor spoke to us in the words of the late Laureate : —

> ‘ No longer caring to embalm
> In dying songs a dead regret,
> But like a statue solid set,
> And moulded in colossal calm.’

Impressions — first impressions of Athens throng on the mind so closely and so vividly, that they are not easily reduced to order. A visit to Athens is worth the study of a hundred books, whether classical or recent. Any man who has sailed round Greece from the Ionian Sea to the Ægean, and up the Gulf of Corinth, and thence to that of Ægina and Eleusis, at once perceives that Greece was destined by nature to be, not so much the country of a settled nation, as the mere *pied-a-terre* of a wonderful race whose mission was to penetrate over the whole Mediterranean and its shores. These so-called Greek states, celebrated in the immortal pages of Thucydides, were but petty cock-pits wherein, like game birds, these historic republics crowed, strutted, and fought each other. Greek war, from the point of view of modern armies, was but the playing at soldiers like the people of Lilliput and Blefuscu. An army which could not defend such a country as Attica from invaders, or the army which having got beneath the Long-walls could not take Athens, can hardly be classed amongst soldiers at all. Scipio or Julius Cæsar with one legion would have settled the Peloponnesian war in a few months. As we behold it from a near height, we see that Athens always was, and always must be, an artificial city, resting entirely on its control of the sea and territory beyond sea. There is nothing behind Athens to support a population, and there never can be anything. Indeed in continental Greece itself, with its interminable barren rocks, there is no room for anything but a few herds, and sundry patches of olives, vines, currants, fruits, and tobacco. Continental Greece is in truth a mere mountain rising out of the sea, with a total population less than that of the city of Berlin.

Greece was therefore destined to be a sea power only, and, in recounting its achievements on land, her historians are liable to mislead us altogether. The Spartans no doubt remained for many centuries individually, like Soudanese, 'first-class fighting men.' But they knew nothing of scientific war, and seem throughout their history to have been commanded by mere drill-sergeants. They were, as a Frenchman irreverently remarked of another brave army, 'lions led by asses.' Their stupidity, slowness, incapacity to develop the art of war, their slavish adherence to routine and tradition, prevented them for ever being really effective; and, though they were a race of mere soldiers, they never became a really war-like race. The Athenians, however good at sea, were on land untrustworthy, excitable, undisciplined crowds of civilians. They had hours of heroism, as at Marathon; but, after all, Marathon was rather a moral victory, won by genius, *élan*, and a sort of spasmodic patriotism which astonished the victors as much as the defeated. It was hardly a great battle fought out on a regular plan. And, after Marathon, the Athenians did nothing very great on land. Their campaigns were unworthy of notice, and their conduct in the field has that character of unsteadiness which belongs to citizen levies. The Macedonians under Alexander were trained and excellent troops, equal perhaps to anything in ancient war; but the Macedonians were not Greeks. It is melancholy to think how largely the attention of academies and schools is absorbed in these trumpery scuffles which have no scientific interest of their own, and which, from the historical point of view, could have no serious result.

It is the wonderful literary and poetic genius of Greece which has given a halo to these petty manœuvres. And to the same cause may be traced the singular phenomenon of the revival of Hellenism in the present century, by a people who, as a whole, have but a tincture of Hellenic blood. The process of reviving ancient Greece is still proceeding with immense rapidity, and in curious modes. Seventy years ago, Greek (or Romaïc as it was called) was a tongue only spoken by certain classes in certain places; and it was in no sense the language of Xenophon or even Plutarch. None but a few scholars were familiar with the term Hellenes, or with anything of Hellenic history or literature. The cultivated men of Greece have now placed the current Hellenic tongue much nearer to that of Plutarch than our English is like that of Chaucer; and newspapers, written in a language which Herodotus could easily follow, are circulated as far as Trieste and Constantinople. After two thousand years, a language, which is practically the Greek of literature, is again paramount from Corfu to Crete, from Larissa to Cerigo, from the Ionian islands to the Sporades. The ancient names, the ancient architecture, the ancient taste for reading, are revived. The effect is that of an illusion. One's guide is Sophocles, and the cab-driver is Themistocles; one drives along the Ὁδὸς Ἑρμοῦ, and at every street corner one sees a name familiar to us in Thucydides and Aristophanes, and many an absurd compound, such as *ἱπποσιδηρόδρομος*, or tramway. Of course much of all this is artificial, and irresistibly comic, like the solemn revival of Olympian Games. But there is enough below the surface to be counted as one of the most curious examples of the subjective filiation of ideas to be met with in modern times. And it is a truly pathetic illustration of the imperishable fascination exerted over all after ages, by the genius of ancient Hellas.

The revival is the more interesting, since few competent observers believe in the survival of Hellenic blood. It is needless here to touch on the obstinate dispute as to how much of the blood of the Hellenes runs in the veins of the modern Greek people. In certain islands, in parts of Peloponnesus, in certain mountain districts, it may do so to a qualified extent. In some parts of the mainland, it is perhaps almost wholly extinct, and Attica is one of the districts where the immortal fluid is the thinnest of all. When we consider how greatly Athens, its ports, mines, and territories, was even in ancient times, peopled with alien blood; how that, from Christian times until the present generation, the population of Athens had sunk to that of a village; when we read Gibbon's scathing picture of what Athens was a hundred years ago, or even Byron's prose account of it eighty years ago; when we learn that sixty years ago, when it became a capital, it had only 300 houses, and a mixed population — it is physically certain that the 130,000 inhabitants of Athens and the Piræus must be mainly an immigrant people.

The fact that the recrudescence of the old Attic salt, even in its peculiarities and foibles, must be due to some intellectual filiation of ideals and habits, and not at all to race inheritance, makes the sight of the re-Hellenisation of Hellas the more interesting as a study. If we read Byron's melancholy picture of Athens and the Athenians, whilst we roam in the bright and ambitious city of King George to-day, we may note one of the most singular transformations that modern history can show us. Where the poet found only a few abject slaves, we may now see one of the most busy political towns in Europe. To see pure democracy, as described by Aristophanes, we should go, not to New York, Paris, or East London, but to Athens; and there watch Demos in his native cradle, under the sky of Athene, and in full view of Propylæa and Pnyx, listening with passionate keenness to his favourite orator, who, in the language of Pericles or Cleon, is extolling the future of the Hellenic idea. It may be that in its indigenous soil the art of ochlocratic Bunkum has developed with unusual profusion; and perhaps the Pan-Hellenic idea has given rise to nonsense even worse than that of the Pan-Britannic or Pan-Slavonic idea. But the habit of treating the aspirations of an ambitious young nation with supercilious patronage, and of ridiculing their really wonderful material progress, is not reasonable or even decent. The extravagances of Hellenic vanity are hardly greater than the extravagances of national vanity in many parts of the Old and New World. And the progress that has been made by Greece in sixty years, under great difficulties, and with very narrow resources, is a fact that cannot be denied.

Greece is a country more keenly proud and more fiercely jealous of her memorials of the past than any people on the face of the earth. The remnants of the great age are all that she has to recall the history out of which her renewed existence as a nation is built. They are to Greece her Magna Charta, her Statute Book, her Westminster Abbey, her St. Stephen's in one. She is making sacrifices to recover, preserve, and display every fragment of ancient art. Her Museums and National Collections are quite as well kept as ours, and quite as adequate for their purpose. They fill a far larger part of the nation's interest and the business of the State than do ours. They are quite as safe as those of Berlin, Paris, or Rome, and are far less exposed to soot and damp than those of London. The only danger that could threaten them would be from the navy of some Western power. The time then has come, on grounds of international morality, to restore the sublime fragments which seventy years ago an English ambassador tore away from the Parthenon. English literature contains an enduring protest against this Vandalism, which Lord Byron denounced as 'the last poor plunder of a bleeding land,' —

> 'Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
> And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
> And snatch'd thy shrinking gods to northern climes abhorred.'

The removal of these stones from Athens would be impossible in our age, and was only made possible by their happening to be within the power of an Oriental despot. Their acquisition can reflect nothing but dishonour on our name: as Byron said, 'the honour of England is not advanced by plunder.' But the conditions of the case have changed: and the 'Elgin marbles' stand on a footing wholly different from the other treasures that our Museums possess. These collective works of art, of which our Museum has a part, still remain *in situ* where they were placed, and they form part of the very structure of the temple which still stands there as a majestic ruin. The Greek people have raised on the Acropolis itself a national museum, where every fragment of the ancient work that once adorned it, is religiously preserved. The collection is unique, incomparable, of inestimable value, and is constantly being increased. It derives its peculiar impressiveness from the fact that these priceless relics still remain on the sacred citadel of Athene, under the shadow of the mighty temple of which they formed part. The Parthenon gains a new charm by their presence; whilst the statues gain a fresh power by being within its precinct. Pheidias, Ictinus, Pericles, acquire each a new dignity in our eyes, as we contemplate the ruin and its adornments on the ever-consecrated spot where such amazing genius laboured and thought.

We go to our own Museum, and we are wont to plume ourselves on the diplomacy and taste of the eminent personage who secured these treasures. We say they are now safe, carefully preserved, and accessible to every one. Perhaps it was wrong to steal them, but now that it is done, it cannot be mended. In the meantime the British public can study High Art at its leisure. But there is something above High Art, and that is national honour, and international morality. And when, in the enthusiasm of a first visit to the city of Plato, Sophocles, and Pheidias, we behold the empty pediments which we have wrecked, and the blank spaces out of which our national representative tore metopes and frieze, when we see the terra-cotta Caryatid, which is forced to do duty for her whom we have ravished from the temple of Erechtheus—it is not so easy to repeat the robber sophism: having plundered, it is best to keep the plunder. One day the conscience of England will revive, and she will rejoice to restore the outraged emblems of Hellenic art to the glorious sky, where only they are at home, on that immortal rock, and beneath the shadow of the sublime temple, which a supreme genius made them to ennoble. And our eloquent discourses about Art will gain by being sweetened with honesty and good manners.

CHAPTER XI.

CONSTANTINOPLE AS AN HISTORIC CITY.[1]

I. *Byzantine History.*

Of all the cities of Europe the New Rome of the Bosphorus, in its power over the imagination of men, can yield the first place to none save to its own mother, the Old Rome of the Tiber. And of all cities of the world she stands foremost in beauty of situation, in the marvel of her geographical position, as the eternal link between the East and the West. We may almost add that she is foremost in the vast continuity and gorgeous multiplicity of her historic interests. For if Constantinople can present us with nothing that can vie in sublimity and pathos with the memories of Rome, Athens, Jerusalem, it has for the historic mind a peculiar fascination of its own, in the enormous persistence of imperial power concentrated under varied forms in one unique spot of our earthly globe.

Byzantium, to use that which has been the ordinary name with all Greek writers from Herodotus down to Paspates in our own day, is one of the oldest cities of Europe: historically speaking, if we neglect mere prehistoric legend, little younger than Athens or Rome. Like them, Byzantium appears to have been founded on a pre-historic fort. Hardly any of the ancient towns of Italy and Southern Europe can show so authentic and venerable a record. There is no reason to doubt that

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1894, No. 328, vol. 55.

Byzantium has been a historic city for some 2550 years: during the whole of that period, with no real break in her life, it has been the scene of events recorded in the annals of mankind; it has been fought for and held by men famous in world history, it has played a substantive part in the drama of civilisation. So singular a sequence of historic interest can hardly be claimed for any city in Europe, except for Rome herself.

For nearly a thousand years before it became the capital of an empire, Byzantium was a Greek city of much importance, the prize of contending nations, and with striking prescience even then chosen out by philosophic historians for its commanding position and immense capabilities. After the lapse of nearly a thousand years, Byzantium became Constantinople, the centre of the Roman Empire. Since then it has been the capital city of an empire for exactly 1564 years — and that in a manner and for a period such as no other imperial city has been in the annals of civilised man. There is no actual break; although, for the dynasty of the Palæologi, from the Latin Empire down to the capture by the Ottomans, the empire outside the capital had a shrunken and almost phantom dominion. But it is yet true, that for 1564 years Constantinople has ever been, and still is, the sole regular residence of Emperors and Sultans, the sole and continuous centre of civil and military administration, the supreme court of law and justice, and the official centre of the imperial religion.

During all this period, the life of the empire has been concentrated in that most wonderful peninsula, as its heart and its head. It has been concentrated for a far longer period, and in a more definite way, than even it was in the original Seven Hills; for Rome herself was the local seat of empire for scarcely four centuries, and even for that in an intermittent form; and vast as has been the continuity of the Roman Church for at least thirteen centuries, its life, and even its official government, have had many seats and continual movements. But from the days of Constantine, Constantinople has been, both in the temporal and spiritual domains, the centre, the home, the palladium of the empire of the East. For fifteen centuries the Lord of Constantinople has never ceased to be the Lord of the contiguous East; and, whilst sea and rock hold in their accustomed places, the Lord of Constantinople must continue to be Lord of South-Eastern Europe and of North-Western Asia.

This continuity and concentration of imperial rule in an imperial city have no parallel in the history of mankind. Rome was the local centre of empire for barely four centuries, and for sixteen centuries she has wholly lost that claim. The royal cities that once flourished in the valleys of the Ganges, the Euphrates, or the Nile, were all abandoned after some centuries of splendour, and have long lost their imperial rank. Memphis, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Alexandria, Syracuse, Athens, had periods of glory, but no great continuity of empire. London and Paris have been great capitals for at most a few centuries; and Madrid, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg are things of yesterday in the long roll of human civilisation. There is but one city of the world of which it can be said that, for fifteen centuries and a half, it has been the continuous seat of empire, under all the changes of race, institutions, customs, and religion. And this may be ultimately traced to its incomparable physical and geographical capabilities.

Mere duration of imperial power and variety of historical interest are indeed far different from true greatness or national dignity. But as an object of the historical imagination, the richness of the record, in the local annals of some world-famous spot, cannot fail to kindle our thoughts.

History, alas! is not the record of pure virtue and peaceful happiness: it is the record of deeds big with fate to races of men, of passions, crimes, follies, heroisms, and martyrdoms in the mysterious labyrinth of human destiny. The stage whereon, over so vast a period of man's memory, ten thousand of such tragedies have been enacted, holds with a spell the mind of every man who is in sympathy with human nature, and who loves to meditate on the problems of human progress.

History and European opinion have been until lately most unjust to the Byzantine empire, whether in its Roman, its Greek, or in its Ottoman form. By a singular fatality its annals and its true place have been grossly misunderstood. Foreign scholars, German, French, Russian, and Greek, have done much in recent years to repair this error; and English historians, though late in the field, are beginning to atone for neglect in the past. Finlay worthily led the way, in spite of sympathies and antipathies which almost incapacitate an historian from fully grasping Byzantine history; Professor Freeman struck the true note in some of his most weighty and pregnant pieces, perhaps the most original and brilliant of his essays; and now Professor Bury, of Dublin, has undertaken the task of casting into a scientific and systematic history those wonderful narratives of which Gibbon gave us detached and superb sketches, albeit with limited resources and incomplete knowledge. Edwin Pears, in a fine monograph, has given us very much more than the history of the Fourth Crusade.[1] And the incessant labours of foreign scholars are beginning to filter even into the ideas of the general reader. Russian and Greek monasteries have preserved unknown and precious chronicles; and Armenian, Saracen, and Persian manuscripts have lately been added to our annals. The terrible *Corpus* of Byzantine histories becomes less heartbreaking in its dryness and its affectation, with all the light that modern scholarship has thrown upon that record of romantic and tremendous events, too often told by official annalists with pedantic dulness and cold-blooded commonplace. Krause, Hopf, Heyd, Gfrörer, in Germany; Sabatier, Rambaud, Schlumberger, Drapeyron, Bayet, in France; Byzantios, and Paspates, in Greece, have given a new life to this vast repertory of a thousand years of varying fortune.[1]

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[1] *History of Greece*, from 146 B.C. to A.D. 1864, by George Finlay, ed. by H. F. Tozer, 7 vols.; *Historical Essays*, by E. A. Freeman, third series, 1879; *The Later Roman Empire*, from 395 A.D. to 800 A.D., by J. B. Bury, Trin. Coll. Dub., 2 vols., 1889; *The Fall of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade*, by Edwin Pears, LL.D., 1885; *The History of the Byzantine Empire*, by C. Oman, 1893.

At the same time, the local archæology of Constantinople has received a new impulse. The political and economic changes which resulted from the course of events, from the Crimean War of 1853 to the Treaty of San Stefano in 1878, have opened Constantinople much as Japan was opened thirty years ago. European scholars and resident Greeks have been enabled to study the remains; the Sultan has formed a most interesting museum under Hamdi Bey, a Turkish archæologist; and Dr. Paspates, a Greek antiquarian, has attempted in the cuttings and works of the new railway, almost wholly to reconstruct Byzantine topography. The vague and somewhat traditional localisation repeated by Banduri, Ducange, Gyllius, Busbecq, and the rest, has now been corrected by scientific inspection of ruins and partial excavation. The ingenious labours of Labarte, Salzenberg, Schlumberger, Bayet, Mordtmann, Riant, and others,[1] have been tested by some new excavations on the spot. No one could well deal with Byzantine antiquities without examining the works of the late Dr. Paspates, especially of the *Byzantine Palaces*, which is now accessible to the English reader in the new translation of Mr. Metcalfe (1893).

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[1] Sabatier, *Monnaies Byzantines*, 1862; Rambaud, *L'Empire Grec au Xme. Siècle*, 1870; Drapeyron, *L'Empereur Héraclius*, 1869; Schlumberger, *Un Empereur Byzantin*, 1890; Krause, *Die Byzantiner des Mittelalters*, 1869; Gfrörer, *Byzantinische Geschichten*, 1872–1877.

We have all been unjust to this Byzantine empire; and its restoration to its true place in the story of human civilisation is beyond doubt the great *lacuna* of our current histories. What they tell us is mainly the story of its last four hundred years — when the Eastern empire was dying under the mortal blows inflicted on it as it stood between the fanaticism of the East and the jealousy of the West. Of the seven centuries from Theodosius to the Crusades we hear little save Palace intrigues, though these years were the true years of glory in Byzantine history. This was the period when she handed down, and handed down alone, the ancient world to the modern; when Constantinople was the greatest and most civilised city in Europe, the last refuge of law, arts, and learning, the precursor of the Crusades in defending Christian civilisation by four centuries. Before the Crusades were undertaken by Europe, the Eastern empire was falling into corruption and decay. But down to the middle of the eleventh century, more or less continuously from the opening of the seventh, the history of the Eastern Romans may honourably compare with the history of Western Europe, whilst in certain essential elements of civilisation, they stood not merely first in Europe, but practically alone. If Chosroes, or Muaviah, or Haroun, or Crumn, had succeeded in blotting out the empire of the Bosphorus, it is difficult to imagine from whence we should have been able to recover either Roman law, or Hellenic art, or ancient poetry and learning, or the complex art of organised government, or the traditions and manufactures of cultured civilisation. At any rate, the whole history of mankind would have taken a different course.

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[1] Banduri, *Imperium Orientale*, 1711, 2 vols. fol.; Ducange, *Constantinopolis Christiana;* Gyllius, *De Topogr. Constantin.;* Busbecq, *Letters*, tr. by Forster and Daniel, 2 vols., 1881; Salzenberg, *Alt-Christliche Baudenkmale*, 1854, fol.; Labarte, *Le Palais Impérial, de Constantinople*, 4to, 1861; Paspates, Βυζαντιναὶ Μελέται, 1877; Βυζαντινὰ 'Ανάκτορα, 1885; Πολιορκία καὶ ἀλῶσις, 1890; Professor van Millingen, in Murray's *Handbook*, new ed., 1893; Byzantios, Κωνσταντινούπολις, 1851–59, 3 vols.

Neither under Roman, Greek, or Ottoman has the empire been, except at intervals, the abyss of corruption, servility, and vice that Western prejudice has too long imagined. Horrors, follies, meanness, and pedantry abound; but there is still a record rich in heroism, intellectual energy, courage, skill, and perseverance, which are as memorable as any in the world. Neither the intellect, nor the art, nor the religion are those of Western Europe; nor have we there the story of a great people or a purifying Church, of a profound philosophy, or a progressive civilisation. Constantinople is, and always has been, as much Eastern as Western — yet with much that is neither of the East nor of the West — but special to itself. It is a type of Conservatism, of persistency and constancy unparalleled, amidst change, decay, and defeat. This miraculous longevity and recuperative power seem to go counter to all the lessons of Western Europe; or in the West they are to be matched only by the recuperative power of the Catholic Church. The city and the Church, which date from Constantine, have both in these fifteen centuries shown a strange power of recovery from mortal maladies and hopeless difficulties. But the recovery of temporal dominion is always more rare than the revival of spiritual ideas. And in recuperative energy and tenacity of life, the empire of the Bosphorus, from Constantine to Abdul Hamid, is one long paradox.

The continuity of empire in Constantinople suffered, it is true, a tremendous breach in dynasty, in race, and in religion, by the conquest of the Turks; and, if it were a Christian, and Roman, or Latin, or Greek empire for 1123 years, it has been a Moslem and Ottoman empire for 441 years. To many historians these 441 years have been a period of Babylonish captivity for the chosen people. But those who are not especially Philhellene or Philorthodox, in any absolute sense, will view this great problem without race or sectarian animosities. Before the impartial judgment-seat of history the lesson of the past lies in the unfolding of genius in government and in war, in organising nations, and in moulding their destinies; and where these great capacities exist, there is no room to indulge the prejudices of a partisan. The two centuries of Stamboul which follow the conquest of Mohammed the Second, in 1453, are greatly superior in interest and in teaching to the two centuries of Byzantine empire which precede it, and the miserable tale of the Latin usurpation. Nor has the whole Ottoman rule of four centuries and a half been less brilliant, less rich in great intellects and great characters, than the Byzantine empire from the time of the Crusades till its fall — perhaps even not more oppressive to its subjects, nor more antagonistic to moral and social progress. The marvellous city that Constantine created in 330 A.D. has been ever since that day the effective seat of such government as the Eastern regions around it could maintain, of such civilisation as they could evolve, and of such religious union as they were able to receive. That empire, that type of society, seem preparing to-day for an ultimate withdrawal into Asia. But with such a record of persistence and revival, such tenacity of hold on a sacred and imperial centre, few can forecast the issue with confidence. And that future is assuredly amongst the most fascinating enigmas which can engage the meditations of thinking men.

It is an acute remark of the late Professor Freeman that the history of the empire is the history of the capital. The imperial, religious, legal, and commercial energy of the Eastern empire has always centred in Constantinople, by whomsoever held, in a way that can hardly be paralleled in European history. The Italian successors of Julius and Augustus for the most part spent their lives and carried on their government very largely, and at last almost wholly, away from Rome. Neither had the Western Emperors, nor the chiefs of the Holy Roman Empire, any permanent and continuous seat. The history of England and that of France are associated with many historic towns and many royal residences far from London and from Paris. Nor do the histories of Spain, Italy, or Germany, offer us any constant capital or any single centre of government, religion, law, commerce, and art. But of the nearly one hundred sovereigns of the Eastern empire, and of the twenty-eight Caliphs who have succeeded them in Byzantium, during that long epoch of 1564 years, from the day of its foundation, Constantinople has been the uniform residence of the sovereign, except when on actual campaign in time of war or on some imperial progress; and in peace and in war under all dynasties, races, and creeds, it has never ceased to be the seat of official government, the supreme tribunal, and the metropolis of the religious system.

From the age of Theodosius down to the opening of the Crusades — a period of seven centuries — whilst Rome itself and every ancient city in Europe was stormed, sacked, burnt, more or less abandoned, and almost blotted out by a succession of invaders, Constantinople remained untouched, impregnable, never decayed, never abandoned — always the most populous, the most wealthy, the most cultivated, the most artistic city in Europe — always the seat of a great empire, the refuge of those who sought peace and protection for their culture or their wealth, a busy centre of a vast commerce, the one home of ancient art, the one school of ancient law and learning left undespoiled and undeserted. From the eighth century to the thirteenth a succession of travellers have described its size, wealth, and magnificence.[1] In the middle of the twelfth century, the Jew Benjamin of Tudela, coming from Spain to Palestine, declares that 'these riches and buildings are equalled nowhere in the world'; 'that merchants resort thither from all parts of the world.' From about the eleventh century the downfall of the city began. It was ruined by the political jealousy of the Western empire, by the religious hostility of the Roman Church, and by the commercial rivalry of the Italian republics. Placed between these irreconcilable enemies on the west, the incessant attacks of the Slavonic races on the north, and the aspiring fanaticism of Musulman races from the east and the south, the Byzantine empire slowly bled to death, and its capital became, for some three centuries, little more than a besieged fortress — filled with a helpless population and vast treasures and relics it could no longer protect.

But whether the empire was in glory or in decay, into whatever race it passed, and whatever was the official creed, Constantinople never failed to attract to itself whatever of genius and ambition the Eastern empire contained, nor did it ever cease, nor has it ceased, to be a great mart of commerce, and clearing-house of all that the East and the West desired to exchange. It is still to the Greek priest, as it is to the Musulman imâm, what Rome is to the Catholic. And to the Greek from Alexandria to New York it is still what Rome is to the Italian, and what Paris is to the Frenchman. In a sense, it is almost still the traditional metropolis of the Orthodox Greek, of the Armenian, and almost of the Levantine Jew, as well as of the Moslem. Its history is the history of the Balkan peninsula, for its twenty famous sieges have been the turning-points in the rise and fall of the empire. The inner history of the thrones of the East has been uniformly transacted within those walls and upon the buried stones and fragments whereon we may still stand to-day and ponder on the vicissitudes of fifteen centuries and a half.

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[1] *Early Travels in Palestine*, ed. T. Wright, 1868; Krause, *Die Byzantiner des Mittelalters*, 1869; Heyd, *Levantehandel*, 1879; French ed. 1885; Riant, *Exuviæ sacræ Constant.*, 1877; Hopf, *Chroniques Greco-Romanes inédites*, 1873.

II. *Topographical Conditions.*

A large part of this strange radiation of Eastern history from the new Eternal City is unquestionably due to its unique local conditions. From Herodotus and Polybius down to Gibbon and Freeman, historians, ancient and modern, have expatiated on the unrivalled situation of Byzantium on the Bosphorus. There is no other so apt to become the seat of a great city on the habitable globe. Standing on the extreme easternmost point of the Balkan peninsula, it is within easy voyage of the entire coast-line of Asia Minor on its northern, western, and southern faces. As an early traveller pointed out, Constantinople 'is a city which Nature herself has designed to be the mistress of the world. It stands in Europe, looks upon Asia, and is within reach by sea of Egypt and the Levant on the south — and of the Black Sea and its European and Asiatic shores on the north.'[1] Something of the kind might be said for such cities as Corinth, or Thessalonica, Smyrna, or Athens; but the extraordinary feature of Byzantium, which confers on it so peculiar a power of defence and attack is this — that whilst having ample and secure roadsteads and ports all round it, it has both on the north and the south, a long, narrow, but navigable sea channel, of such a kind that, in ancient or in modern warfare, it can be made impregnable against any invading fleet.

Constantinople was thus protected by two marine gates which could be absolutely closed to any hostile ship, whether coming from the Black Sea or from the Ægean, but which can be instantly opened to its own or any friendly ship coming or going over the whole area of the Euxine or the Mediterranean. Whilst thus impregnably defended by sea, she could bar invasion by land by her vast rampart running from sea to sea, and not more than four miles in length. And at a distance of some thirty miles further west, a second wall, twenty feet wide and about forty miles long, shut off from north and west the main peninsula and ran from the Propontis to the Euxine. Constantinople in ancient times thus held what, with an adequate sea and land force, was the strongest defensive position in Europe, if not in the world. For by sea she could bar all approach from east, north, or south; whilst on the west, the only landward approach, she was protected by a double rampart, placed upon a double peninsula, to say nothing of the natural bulwark of the Balkan mountains.

To this incomparable position of security we must add that, whilst one side of the city faces an inland sea of wonderful beauty, which is rather a lake than a sea, another side of the city looks across the Bosphorus to Asia; on the third side of the city is her own secure port of the

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[1] Busbecq's *Letters*, translated by Forster and Daniel, 1881, vol. i. p. 123.

Golden Horn, about four miles long and more than half a mile wide. Here a thousand ships can ride in safety, and the channel is so deep that in places the biggest vessels can lie beside the quays. The country round is diversified with hills, valleys, and tableland, broken by bays and gulfs, and crowned with distant mountains. The Propontis and its shores teem with fish, fruit, vines, woods, and marbles, whilst in the far horizon the snowy folds of the Bithynian Olympus float as a dim but radiant vision in the distance.

The extension of modern artillery has reduced and almost destroyed the defensive capacities of the city on the landward. But from the time of Xerxes until the present century, its power of defence was almost perfect so long as Byzantium could command the sea. She possessed nearly all the advantages of an island; but of an island placed in a sheltered inland sea, an island from which rich districts both of Asia and Europe could be instantly reached in open boats, or by a few hours' sail in any kind of ship. A city, having magnificent harbours and roadsteads and abundant waterways in every direction, had all the peculiar features which have gone to create the power of Syracuse, Alexandria, Venice, Amsterdam, London, or New York. But Byzantium had this additional security — that, with all the facilities of an island, she could close her marine gates against any hostile fleet and forbid their approach within sight. Tyre, Carthage, Athens, Syracuse, Alexandria — we may say all famous seaports throughout the Mediterranean (except Venice, which lay safe in her lagoons), were exposed to a hostile fleet; and all of them have been more than once invested by invaders from the sea. But so long as Byzantium had forces enough at sea to close the gate of the Bosphorus and also that of the Hellespont, she was unassailable by any hostile fleet. And so long as she had forces enough on land to man the long wall across the great peninsula, and also to defend her great inner fortifications across the smaller peninsula, she was impregnable to any invading army.

It would be unwise in a civilian to express any opinion of his own on the very important problem of the degree in which modern appliances of war have deprived Constantinople of her peculiar powers of defence. We are told that, so far as the closing of the Bosphorus and the Hellespont extend, the resources of the artillerist and the submarine engineer have greatly increased their defensive capacity. Constantinople is, of course, no longer safe from an enemy posted on the heights, either above Pera, Scutari, or Eyub; and obviously her ancient walls and fortification are useless. But with first-class forts to protect both Scutari and Pera, and also the heights to the west of the city — which together might require some four complete *corps d'armées* — and with a first-class fleet in the Marmora, Constantinople would, even to-day, be far stronger for defence than any existing capital in Europe, perhaps stronger than any great city in the world.

The peculiar position of Byzantium was alike fitted for offence or for defence. It was essentially a maritime position, the full resources of which could only be used by a power strong at sea. If it issued northwards, through its gate on the Bosphorus, it could send a fleet to any point of the Black Sea — a vast expanse of 172,000 square miles, having one of the greatest drainage areas in the world. Thus, in a few days, armies and munitions could be carried to the mouths either of the Danube, the Dnieper, or the Don, to the shores of the Crimea, or else eastward to the foot of the Caucasus, or to any point on the north coast of Asia Minor. If it issued south through the Propontis and the Hellespont, a few days would carry its armies to the teeming shores of Bithynia, or to the rich coasts and islands of the Ægean Sea, or to Greece, or to any point on the western or the southern coast of Asia Minor. And a few days more would bring its fleets to the coast of Syria, or of Egypt, or to Italy, Spain, Africa, and the Western Mediterranean. Thus, the largest army could be safely transported in a few days, so as to descend at will upon the vast plains of Southern Russia, or into the heart of Central Asia, within a short march of the head waters of the Euphrates — or they might descend southwards to the gates of Syria, near Issus, or else to the mouths of the Nile, or to the islands and bays of Greece or Italy.

And these wide alternatives in objective point could be kept for ultimate decision unknown to an enemy up to the last moment. When the great Heraclius, in 622, opened his memorable war with Chosroes, which ended in the ruin of the Persian dynasty, no man in either host knew till the hour of his sailing whether the Byzantine hero intended to descend upon Armenia by the Euxine, or upon Syria by the Gulf of Issus. And until they issued from the Hellespont into the Ægean, the Emperor's army and fleet were absolutely protected not only from molestation, but even from observation. To a power which commanded the sea and had ample supplies of troopships, Constantinople combined the maximum power of defence with the maximum range of attack. And this extraordinary combination she will retain in the future in competent hands.

That wonderfully rapid and mobile force, which an eminent American expert has named the 'Sea Power,' the power discovered by Cromwell and Blake, of which England is still the great example and mistress, was placed by the founders of Byzantium in that spot of earth which, at any rate in its anciently-peopled districts, combined the greatest resources. Byzantium, from the days of the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars, had always been a prize to be coveted by a naval power. From the time of Constantine down to the Crusades, or for nearly eight centuries, the rulers of Constantinople could usually command large and well-manned fleets. And this was enough to account for her imperial place in history. As an imperial city she must rise, decline, or fall, by her naval strength. She fell before the Crusaders in a naval attack; and she was crippled to a great extent by the naval attack of Mohammed the Conqueror. During the zenith of the Moslem Conquest, she was great by sea. Her decline in this century has been far greater on sea than on land. When her fleet was shattered at Sinope, in 1853, the end was not far off. And when to-day we see in the Golden Horn the hulls of her ironclads moored motionless, and they say, unable to move, men know that Stamboul is no longer the queen of the Levant.

As a maritime city, also, Constantinople presents this striking problem. For fifteen centuries, with moderate intervals, this city of the Bosphorus and the Propontis has held imperial rule. No other seaport city, either in the ancient or in the modern world, has ever maintained an empire for a period approaching to this in length. Tyre, Carthage, Athens, Alexandria, Venice, Genoa, Amsterdam, have held proud dependencies by their fleets for a space, but for rarely more than a few generations or centuries. The supremacy of the seas, of which Englishmen boast, can hardly be said to have had more than two centuries of trial. The city of the Bosphorus has been tried by fifteen centuries of fierce rivalry and obstinate war; and for long periods together she saw powerful enemies permanently encamped almost within sight of her towers. Yet she still commands the gates of the Euxine and the Hellespont, just as Herodotus and Polybius tell us that she did two thousand years ago. Nor can any man who has studied that marvellous peninsula fail to see that, so soon as Constantinople again falls into the hands of a great naval power, she must recover her paramount control over the whole shore of South-Eastern Europe and North-Western Asia.

Herodotus tells us how Darius' general, in the sixth century B.C., judged its position, in the well-known saying that Chalcedon, the city on the Asiatic shore opposite, must have been founded by blind men, for they overlooked the superior situation on which Byzantium was soon after placed. Thucydides records the part played by the city in the Peloponnesian war; and Polybius, the scientific historian of the second century B.C., describes it with singular insight. 'Of all cities in the world,' he says, 'it is the most happy in its position on the sea; being not only secure on that side from all enemies, but possessed of the means of obtaining every kind of necessaries in the greatest plenty.' And he enlarges on its extraordinary command of the commercial route from the Euxine to the Mediterranean. He explains the disadvantages of its position on the land side, and the reasons which hindered Byzantium from becoming a commanding city in Greece. The main reason was the proximity of the barbarous and irrepressible Thracians; for the old Byzantium was never strong enough to wall in and defend the whole peninsula by the wall of Anastasius, nor was it rich enough to maintain such an army as would overawe the tribes of the Balkan.

No doubt the founders of Chalcedon on the Asian side were not blind, but they feared the Thracians of the European side, and were not able to dispossess the tribe settled on the peninsula. But a problem arises. Why, if the situation of Byzantium were so predominant, did it remain for a thousand years a second-class commercial city of Greece?

and then, why, in the fourth century, did it become the natural capital of Eastern Europe? The answer is plain. The magnificent maritime position of Byzantium was neutralised so long as the Balkan peninsula and the valley of the Danube was filled with barbarous nomads. The great wars of Trajan and his successors, in the first and second centuries, for the first time brought the whole basin of the Danube into the limits of the empire. Thus, when Constantinople was founded, it was secure by land as well as by sea. When, in the fifth and sixth centuries, Italy, Spain, Gaul, and Africa were swept by a succession of Northern invaders, the Empire had command of great armies, ample to man the vast system of fortifications across her double peninsula. And thus she resisted the torrent which submerged and devastated Western Europe.

The part played by Byzantium down to the time of Constantine was subordinate, but significant. It is frequently mentioned by almost all the ancient historians; and of famous chiefs who were concerned with it we have Pausanias the victor of Platæa, Cimon, the son of Miltiades, Alcibiades, Epaminondas, Demosthenes, Philip of Macedon, many Roman generals, the Emperors Claudius, Vespasian, Severus, Licinius, and Constantine. It is a strange accident that the city of the later empire and of the Sultans was the city wherein Pausanias, the victor of Platæa, was seized with the mania for assuming an Oriental tyranny, and that it was where the Seraglio now stands that the infatuated king perpetrated the horrid deed of lust and blood, which our poet introduces in his *Manfred.* Is there something in the air of that hill where we now stare at the 'Sublime Porte,' which fires the blood of tyrants to savage and mysterious crime?

The removal of the imperial capital from Rome to Byzantium was one of the most decisive acts on record — a signal monument of foresight, genius, and will. Madrid, St. Petersburg, Berlin, are also capital cities created by the act of a powerful ruler. But none of these foundations can compare in scale and in importance with the tremendous task of moving the seat of empire a thousand miles to the East, from the centre of Italy to the coast of Asia, from a Latin to a Greek city, from a pagan to a Christian population. The motives which impelled Constantine to this momentous step were doubtless complex. Since the time of Trajan, Rome had not been the constant residence of the Emperors, except of Antoninus Pius, nor the regular seat of government. Since the time of Diocletian, Rome had been abandoned as the official centre of the empire. Many places east of it had been tried; and Constantine, when resolved on the great change, seriously contemplated two, if not three, other sites. It had long been agreed that the imperial seat must be transferred towards the East; and there was an instinctive sense that the valley of the Tiber was no longer safe from the incessant onward march of the Teutonic nations in arms.

The tendency was to get somewhere south of the Danube, and within reach of Asia Minor and the Euphrates. The greater chiefs had all felt that the empire must be recast, both politically and spiritually. By the fourth century it was clear that the empire must break with the rooted prejudices that surrounded the Senate of Rome and the gods of the Capitol. And Constantine, the half-conscious and half-convinced agent of the great change — the change from the ancient world to the modern world, from polytheism to Christianity — saw in the Church and Bishop of Rome a power which would never be his creature. Dante tells us that 'Cæsar became a Greek in order to give place to the Roman pastor.' There is much in this: but it is not the whole truth, for Cæsar might have become a Spaniard, or a Gaul, or an Illyrian. Dante might have added that Cæsar became an Oriental, in order to give place to the Goth. Constantinople from the first was a Christian city, with an orthodox Church; but it was a Church that was, from the first, a department of the State.

The topography, apart from the geography of Constantinople, may demand some words; for the history of the city from Constantine to Abdul Hamid is based on its physical characters. We cannot doubt that the many delights of this spot, the varied resources of the surrounding country, the combination of sea, bay, mountain, valley, terrace, and garden, as these rise one beyond the other, have made Constantinople for fifteen centuries the residence of Emperors and Caliphs, the dream and pride of nations, and the crown of imperial ambition.

Those who approach Constantinople from Greece, as all men should, have sailed through that long panorama of island, mountain, and headland which the Ægean Sea presents, past 'Troy town' and the unknown home of its minstrel; and every rock recalls some tale or poem for the three thousand years since European thought and arts rose into being across those waters. The Hellespont has been passed with its legends and histories, and the sea of Marmora with its islands of marble, its rich shores and distant ranges of mountain — and as the morning sun touches the crescents on her domes, the eternal city of New Rome bursts into view, looking on the East and the South across the blue waters of Propontis and Bosphorus, with her seven hills rising towards Europe one behind the other, each crowned with cupola and minaret, amidst arcaded terraces, and groves of acacia, myrtle, and cypress.

This glorious vision, if not the most beautiful, is the most varied and fascinating of its kind in Europe. Some prefer the bay of Naples, or the bay of Salamis, or of Genoa; but neither Naples, nor Athens, nor Rome, nor Genoa, nor Venice, have, as cities, anything of the extent, variety, and complexity of Constantinople, if we include its four or five suburbs, its magnificent sea landscape, its bays, islands, and mountains, in the distance. For Constantinople does not stand upon an open sea like Naples, or Genoa, but on a great marine lake with its shores, vine-clad hills, headlands, and pearly mountain ranges in the far horizon. Like Athens or Venice, it has a seaport without an open sea outside. And as a city, it is vastly more grand and varied than Venice, Athens, Florence, or Edinburgh. Hence, Constantinople combines such sea views as we find round the Western islands of Scotland or of Greece, with the summer sky and vegetation of Italy, and the mountain ranges which fill the horizon from the plains of Lombardy.

Was it more beautiful in the age of the Empire than it is to-day? Perhaps from a distance, from the sea, the Stamboul of to-day is a far more striking sight than the Byzantium of the Cæsars. The minarets, an Eastern and Moslem feature, are the distinctive mark of the modern city, and do much to break the monotony of the Byzantine cupolas. There are four or five mosques which repeat and rival the church of the Holy Wisdom, and some of them have nobler sites. Nor were the towers and battlements of ancient architecture to be compared in beauty and in scale with those of Mediæval and Moslem builders. But the city, as seen within, in the Isaurian and Basilian dynasties, we may assume in the five centuries which separate Justinian from the First Crusade, must have greatly surpassed in noble art, if not in pictorial effect, the Ottoman city that we see. The enormous palace and hippodrome, the basilicas, churches, halls, and porticoes, with their profusion of marble, mosaic, bronzes, and paintings, their colossal figures, obelisks, and columns, the choicest relics of Greek sculpture, the memorial statues, baths, theatres, and forums — must have far surpassed the decaying remnant of Stamboul which so often disenchants the traveller when he disembarks from the Golden Horn.

III. *Antiquities of Constantinople.*

Constantine created his New Rome in 330, as never ruler before or since created a city. It was made a mighty and resplendent capital within a single decade. Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Mauritania, were despoiled of their treasures to adorn the new metropolis. Constantine built churches, theatres, forums, baths, porticoes, palaces, monuments, and aqueducts. He built, adorned, and peopled a great capital all at a stroke, and made it, after Rome and Athens, the most splendid city of the ancient world. Two centuries later, Justinian became the second founder of the city. And from Constantine down to the capture by the Crusaders, for nearly nine centuries, a succession of Emperors continued to raise great sacred and lay buildings. Of the city before Constantine little remains above the ground, except some sculptures in the museum, and foundations of some walls, which Dr. Paspates believes that he can trace. Of Constantine and his immediate successors there remain parts of the hippodrome, of walls, aqueducts, cisterns, and forums, some columns and monuments. Of the Emperors from Theodosius to the Crusades, we still have, little injured, the grand church of Sophia, some twenty churches much altered and mostly late in date, the foundations of palaces, and one still standing in ruins, and lastly the twelve miles of walls with their gates and towers. The museums contain sarcophagi, statues, inscriptions of the Roman age. But we can hardly doubt that an immense body of Byzantine relics and buildings still lie buried some ten or twenty feet below the ground whereon stand to-day the serails, khans, mosques, and houses of Stamboul, a soil which the Ottoman is loth to disturb. When the day comes that such scientific excavations are possible as have been made in the Forum and the Palatine at Rome, we may yet look to unveil many monuments of rare historical interest, and, it might be, a few of high artistic value. As yet, the cuttings for the railway have given almost the only opportunity that antiquarians have had of investigating below the surface of the actual city, which stands upon a deep stratum of *débris*.

One monument, eight centuries older than Constantine himself, has been recently disinterred, and curiously enough by English hands. It is one of the oldest, most historic, most venerable relics of the ancient world. The Serpent Column of bronze from Delphi, set up by the Greeks as base for the golden tripod to commemorate the final defeat of Xerxes, an object of pilgrimage for Greeks for eight centuries, stands still in the spot where a Roman emperor placed it in the hippodrome; and after 2373 years, it still bears witness to the first great victory of the West over the East. When the East triumphed over the West nearly 2000 years later, the conqueror left this secular monument on its base; and during the Crimean war English soldiers dug it out of the surrounding *débris* and revealed the rude inscription of the thirty confederate states exactly as Herodotus and Pausanias record. With the bronze Wolf of the Capitol, it may count as the most precious metal relic which remains from the ancient world; for the Crusaders melted down into pence every piece of bronze statuary they could seize, and carried off to St. Mark's, at Venice, the four horses that bear the name of Lysippus.

Constantinople is rich, not in works of art, for those of the city have been wantonly destroyed, but in historic sites, which appeal to the scholar rather than to the public; but in so singular a conformation of sea and land, the sites can often be fixed with some precision. We may still note the spot where daring pioneers from Megara set up their Acropolis a century and a half before the battle of Marathon; we can trace the original harbour, the position of some temples, and the line of the walls. We can stand beside the burial-place of a long line of emperors, and trace the plan of the forums, palaces, and hippodrome where so vast a succession of stirring scenes took place, some of the earlier monuments and churches, the hall where Justinian promulgated the *Corpus Juris* which has served the greater part of Europe for thirteen centuries and a half. And, above all, we have the great Church in something like its original glory, less injured by time and man than almost any remaining mediæval cathedral.

The Church of S. Sophia is, next to the Pantheon at Rome, the most central and historic edifice still standing erect. It is now in its fourteenth century of continuous and unbroken use; and during the whole of that vast epoch, it has never ceased to be the imperial fane of the Eastern world, nor has it ever, as the Pantheon, been desolate and despoiled. Its influence over Eastern architecture has been as wide as that of the Pantheon over Western architecture, and it has been far more continuous. It was one of the most original, daring, and triumphant conceptions in the whole record of human building; and Mr. Fergusson declares it to be internally 'the most perfect and beautiful church ever yet erected by any Christian people.' Its interior is certainly the most harmonious, most complete, and least faulty of all the great domed and round-arched temples. It unites sublimity of construction with grace of detail, splendour of decoration with indestructible material. It avoids the conspicuous faults of the great temples of Rome and of Florence, whilst it is far richer in decorative effect within than our own St. Paul's or the Panthéon of Paris. Its glorious vesture of marble, mosaic, carving, and cast metal is unsurpassed by the richest of the Gothic cathedrals, and is far more enduring. Though twice as old as Westminster Abbey, it has suffered less dilapidation, and will long outlast it. Its constructive mass and its internal ornamentation far exceed in solidity the slender shafts, the paintings, and the stained glass of the Gothic churches. In this masterly type the mind is aroused by the infinite subtlety of the construction, and the eye is delighted with the inexhaustible harmonies of a superb design worked out in most gorgeous materials.

For Justinian and his successors ransacked the empire to find the most precious materials for the 'Great Church.' The interior is still one vast pile of marble, porphyry, and polished granite, white marbles with rosy streaks, green marbles, blue and black, starred or veined with white. The pagan temples were stripped of their columns and capitals; monoliths and colossal slabs were transported from Rome, and from the Nile, from Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece, so that, with the Pantheon at Rome, this is the one example of a grand structure of ancient art which still remains unruined. The gilded portals, the jewels, pearls, and gold of the altar, the choir adornment of cedar, amber, ivory, and silver, have been long destroyed by the greedy soldiers of the Cross; and the mosaics above with seraphim, apostles, prophets, and Christ in glory have been covered up, but not destroyed, by the fierce soldiers of Mahomet.

It is a fact, almost without parallel in the history of religion, that the Musulman conquerors adopted the Christian cathedral as their own fane, without injuring it, with very little alteration within, and even without changing its name. The Greeks did not adopt the form of Egyptian or Syrian temples; Christians took for the model of their churches the law-courts, but not the temples of Polytheism; Protestants have never found a practical use for the cruciform churches of Catholicism. But Islam accepted the Holy Wisdom as the type of its mosque; partially concealed the Christian emblems and sacred mosaics, added without some courts and the four beautiful minarets, but made no structural change within. And thus the oldest cathedral in Christendom is the type of a thousand mosques; and the figures of Christ and his saints, that a Roman emperor set up in his imperial dome, look down to-day after fifteen centuries on the Westminster Abbey of the Ottoman Caliphs. What a dazzling panorama of stirring, pathetic, and terrific scenes press on the mind of the student of Byzantine history as he recalls all which that vast fane has witnessed in the thousand years that separate the age of Justinian from that of Suleiman the Magnificent: from the day when the great emperor cried out, 'I have surpassed thee, O Solomon!' to the days when Ottoman conquerors gave thanks for a hundred victories over the Cross. Has any building in the world been witness to so vast a series of memorable events?

In historic memories, the walls of Constantinople can compare with her great Church; for the ruined walls are still the most colossal and pathetic relics of the ancient world that remain in Europe. Except the walls round Rome, there is no scene in Europe so strange, so desolate, and mantled with such annals of battle, crime, despair, and heroism. Though the sea walls have been partly removed and much injured by man, the vast rampart on the west which stretches from Blachernæ on the Golden Horn to the Seven Towers on the Marmora, a distance of nearly four miles, is still, but for natural decay and disturbance, in the state in which it was left by Sultan Mohammed the Conqueror in the fifteenth century. It was then more than a thousand years old; and during the whole of that period it had been increased, repaired, strengthened, doubled, and tripled. It is still a museum or vast catacomb of Byzantine history. More fortunate than the walls of Rome and other ancient cities, the western walls of Constantinople have hardly been touched by the hand of man since the Turks entered. This complicated scheme of circumvallation, far stronger than the walls of Rome or of any other ancient or mediæval city, made an impenetrable barrier, whilst adequately manned and defended, down to the invention of the heavy cannon. We can still trace the plan and form of the triple line of wall, of the moat, of the two causeways, of the fourteen gates, and the one hundred and ninety-four towers, and the ruined palace of the later emperors.

Here and there the massive towers are riven and tottering, torn by cannon, earthquake, and centuries of neglect and decay. The shrunken city of Stamboul does not now touch them, and no populous suburbs have grown round them. Cemeteries with cypress and tombstones, the cupola of a small oratory, or the roof of a hospital, alone break the view. But the crumbling walls and towers stand in solitude amidst orchards and gardens, and nothing disturbs the student who deciphers inscriptions set up by Constantines, Leos, Basils, Comneni, and Palæologi, and here and there a Roman eagle and a Greek cross.[1] The Golden

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[1] They have been collected and explained by Dr. Paspates in his Βυζαντιναὶ Μελέται.

Gate, with its two marble towers, prisons, palace halls, the famous Castle of Blachernæ and the Seven Towers, carry us through a thousand years of history — but most of all we linger near the breach hard by the gate of S. Romanus, where the last Constantine met the Ottoman Mohammed in deadly grip, redeeming by his death four centuries of feebleness in his ancestors, as he fell amidst heaps of slain : —

'With his face up to Heaven, in that red monument
Which his good sword had digg'd.'

Of all cities of the world Constantinople is memorable for its sieges, the most numerous and the most momentous in the records of history. For long centuries together the city was a besieged fortress, and during nearly eight centuries her vast fortifications resisted the efforts of all foreign invaders. Goths, Huns, Avars, Slaves, Persians, Saracens, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Turks, and Russians have continually assailed and menaced them in vain. Great conquerors, such as Zabergan, Chosroes, Muaviah, Omar, Moslemah, Crumn, Haroun-al-Raschid, Bayazid, failed to shake them. For ten years a Persian camp stood in arms at Chalcedon across the Bosphorus ; for years the Saracens assailed it year by year in vain (674–677, and 717–718). These sieges were not mere expeditions against a single stronghold ; they involved the fate of an empire and a religion. Had pagans, fire-worshippers or Musulmans, nomad hordes or devastating Mongols succeeded in piercing these walls before the fifteenth century, the course of civilisation would have been seriously changed. For a thousand years these crumbling ramparts, which to-day we see in such pathetic desolation, were the bulwark of European civilisation, of the traditions of Rome, of the Christendom of the East, and in no small degree of learning, arts, and commerce, until the great mediæval reconstruction was ready to appear.

It is a striking proof of the enormous persistency of Byzantine history that the Bulgarians and Russians, both of whom are still pressing eagerly onwards with longing eyes set on the city of the Bosphorus, have been from time to time renewing these attacks for more than a thousand years. It was in 813 that Crumn, the great king of the Bulgarians, opened his terrible onslaught; and it was nearly two centuries later that Basil, 'the slayer of the Bulgarians,' began his triumphant campaign against that secular foe. The first siege of Constantinople by Moslems, that of the Saracen Muaviah in 673, began nearly eight centuries before the last Moslem siege, that under the Ottoman conqueror in 1453. And the first attack on Constantinople by Russians, in 865, was separated by more than a thousand years from their last attack, when they reached San Stefano within sight of the minarets. For all this thousand years the Russian has hungered and thirsted for the 'Sacred City,' whether it were held by Romans, Greeks, Latins, or Ottomans — and hitherto he has hungered and thirsted in vain.

They count more than twenty sieges in all; but the most memorable are undoubtedly the triumphant repulse of Persians and Avars in the reign of Heraclius in 616, and again in 626; the glorious defeat of the Saracens in 673, in the reign of Constantine IV., and again in 717, in the reign of Leo III.; and lastly, the two successful sieges —when Constantinople was captured by the Venetians and Crusaders in 1203–4; and again when it was stormed by Mohammed the Conqueror in 1453. Of all memorable and romantic sieges on record, these two are the most impressive to the historic imagination, by virtue of the crowding of dramatic incidents, the singular energy and wonderful resources they display, and the vast issues which hung on the event. The siege of Tyre by Alexander, of Syracuse by Nicias, of Carthage by Scipio, the two sieges of Jerusalem by Titus and by Godfrey, the successive sackings of Rome, the defence of Rhodes and Malta against the Turks — none of these can quite equal in vivid colour and breathless interest the two great captures of Constantinople, and certainly the last. It stands out on the canvas of history by the magnitude of the issues involved to religion, to nations, to civilisation, in the glowing incidents of the struggle, in the heroism of the defence and of the attack, in the dramatic catastrophe and personal contrast of two typical chiefs, one at the head of the conquerors and the other of the defeated. And by a singular fortune, this thrilling drama, in a great turning-point of human civilisation, has been told in the most splendid chapter of the most consummate history which our language has produced.

The storming and sack of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade by a mixed host of Venetian, Flemish, Italian, and French filibusters, a story so well told by Mr. E. Pears in his excellent monograph, was not only one of the most extraordinary adventures of the Middle Ages, but one of the most wanton crimes against civilisation committed by feudal lawlessness and religious bigotry, at a time of confusion and superstition. It is a dark blot on the record of the Church, and on the memory of Innocent III., and a standing monument of the anarchy and rapacity to which Feudalism was liable to degenerate. The sack of Constantinople by the so-called soldiers of the cross in the thirteenth century was far more bloodthirsty, more wanton, more destructive than the storming of Constantinople by the followers of Mahomet in the fifteenth century. It had far less historic justification, it had more disastrous effects on human progress, and it introduced a less valuable and less enduring type of civilised life. The Crusaders, who had no serious aim but plunder, effected nothing but destruction. They practically annihilated the East Roman Empire, which never recovered from this fatal blow. It is true that the Byzantine Empire had been rapidly decaying for more than a century, and that its indispensable service to civilisation was completed. But the crusading buccaneers burned down a great part of the richest city of Europe, which was a museum and remnant of antiquity; they wantonly destroyed priceless works of art, buildings, books, records, and documents. They effected nothing of their own purpose; and what they indirectly caused was a stimulus to Italian commerce, the dispersion through Europe of some arts, and the removal of the last barrier against the entrance of the Moslem into Europe.

The conquest by the Ottomans in the fifteenth century was a very different thing — a problem too complex to be hastily touched. Europe, as we have seen, was by that time strong enough to win in the long and tremendous struggle with Islam; it was ready to receive and use the profound intellectual and artistic impulse which was caused by the dispersion of the Byzantine Greeks. The Ottoman conquest was no mere raid, but the foundation of a European Empire, now in the fifth century of its existence. The wonderful tale of the rise, zenith, wane, and decay of the European Empire of the Padishah of Roum — one of the least familiar to the general reader — is borne in upon the traveller to Stamboul in the series of magnificent mosques of the conquering sultans of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, in the exquisite fountains, the mausoleums, the khans and fortresses, minarets and towers, and the strange city of kiosques, palaces, gates, gardens, and terraces, known to us as the Seraglio. In these vast and stately mosques, in the profusion of glowing ornament, porcelains, tiles, and carvings, in the incongruous jumble of styles, in the waste, squalor, and tawdry remnants of the abandoned palace of the Padishahs, we read the history of the Ottoman Turks for the last five centuries — splendour beside ruin, exquisite art beside clumsy imitation, courage and pride beside apathy and despair, a magnificent soldiery as of old with a dogged persistency that dies hard, a patient submission to inevitable destiny beside fervour, loyalty, dignity, and a race patriotism which are not to be found in the rank and file of European capitals.

But Stamboul is not only a school of Byzantine history; it has rich lessons of European history. We see the Middle Ages living there still unreformed — the Middle Ages with their colour and their squalor, their ignorance and credulity, their heroism and self-devotion, their traditions, resignation, patience, and passionate faith. We can imagine ourselves in some city of the early Middle Ages, the meeting-place of nations, Venice or Genoa, Paris or Rome, or even old Rome in the age of Trajan, where races, religions, costumes, ideas, and occupations meet side by side but do not mix. The Moslem, the Armenian, the Greek, the Jew, the Catholic, have their own quarters, dress, language, worship, occupation, law, and government. They pass as if invisible to each other, and will neither eat, pray, work, trade, or converse with each other. Stand upon the bridge across the Golden Horn, or in the lovely cloister of Bayazid, and watch the green-turbaned hadjis, the softas, hammals, itinerant vendors, soldiers and sailors, boatmen and mendicants, Roumelian and Anatolian peasants, with all the cosmopolitan collection of the busy and the idle, from the Danube to the Euphrates. It is the East and the West on their one neutral meeting-ground, the one Oriental spot still left in Europe, the one mediæval capital that has survived into the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PROBLEM OF CONSTANTINOPLE.[1]

THE city of the Seven Hills upon the Golden Horn is at once the paradox of mediæval history, and the dilemma of European statesmen. In the historical field it presents a set of problems which no historian has adequately solved, the full difficulties of which have been duly grasped only in our own age. In the political world it presents the great *crux*, over which former generations laboured, fought, and bled; which our own generation seems willing to give up as insoluble, to ignore and to intrust to chance.

There is danger that, in the minute research into local institutions that is now in vogue, the true historical importance of Byzantine story may be forgotten; and danger also that, in the roar of battle round our democratic issues, the political importance of Constantinople as an eternal factor in the European balance of power may be quite lost to sight. Mediæval and modern annals offer to the student no subjects of meditation more fascinating and more mysterious than are the fifteen centuries of New Rome. And the dilemma of what is to be the ultimate fate of Constantinople is as urgent as ever, as perplexing as ever: — nay, it is much more urgent, more perplexing than ever. The ignorant prejudice of conventional historians about the rottenness of the 'Lower Empire' may be set against the purblind commonplace of conventional politicians about the Turkish question having been solved by the British occupation of Egypt.

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[1] *Fortnightly Review*, May 1894, No. 329, vol. 55.

I. *The Historical Problem.*

Since the works on Byzantine history, produced within the last thirty years by European scholars, it is no longer possible to repeat the stock phrases of the last century about the puerility and impotence of the 'Lower Empire.' By far the most important contribution to this task by English students is the *Later Roman Empire* of Professor Bury, whose two solid octavos bring the history of the Roman Empire of the East down to the foundation of the Roman Empire of the West, in 800 A.D. When he has completed his work down to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, or at least to its capture by the Crusaders of 1204 A.D., it will be evident how much the history of the Later Empire has been distorted by jealousy, pedantry, and fanaticism. Even the genius of Gibbon could not wholly emancipate him from current prejudices; and he necessarily worked without the essential materials which the industry of the last hundred years has collected. What has to be explained is the problem — how a political fabric, built on such foundations of vice and chaos, maintained the longest succession recorded in history: — how a state of such discordant elements overcame such a combination of attacks: — what was it that made Constantinople, for some five or six centuries after the capture of Rome, the intellectual, artistic, and commercial metropolis of mediæval Europe: — by what resources did she, during eight centuries, resist the torrent of Asiatic and Musulman soldiery, before which the feudal chivalry of the West was so frequently baffled and crushed.

The origin of these prejudices and of such falsification of history is plain enough. The judgment of Western Europe on the Eastern Empire was mainly derived from, and coloured by, that of Catholic churchmen; and during the eleven centuries which divide the first Constantine from the last, the Catholic Church has borne an irreconcilable jealousy towards the Orthodox Church. Their very official titles — the first claiming universal obedience, the second claiming absolute truth — involved them in a war wherein there could be neither victory nor truce. The chiefs who claimed to rule as representatives of Charlemagne, and all who depended upon them, or held title under them (that is, the greater part of Western Europe), were bound to treat the claims of the Eastern Empire as preposterous insolence. The traders of the Mediterranean regarded the Byzantine wealth and commerce much as the navigators of the sixteenth century regarded the wealth and trade of the Indies — as the lawful prize of the strongest. And lastly, the scholars, the poets, the chroniclers of the West, from the age of the Crusades to the age of Gibbon, have disdained a literature, in which, as they said, spiritless and obsequious annalists recorded the doings of their masters in a bastard Greek. Western genius, Western Christianity, Western heroism and civilisation much surpass the Eastern type; but, with such a combination of causes for hostility and contempt, the West could not fail to be grossly unjust to the record of the East.

The root of the injustice is the treating of a thousand years of continuous history as one uniform piece, and attributing to the noblest periods and the greatest chiefs the infamies and crimes which belong to the worst. Unfortunately, we are much more familiar with the periods of rottenness and decline than with the ages of heroism and glory; every one knows something of the Theodoras, Zoes, and Irenes, and, too often, very little of Heraclius, Leo, and Basil. The five centuries which intervene from Justinian to the Comnenian house — a period as long as that which separates Camillus from Marcus Aurelius — is the important part of the Roman Empire of the East; and the really grand epochs are in the seventh, eighth, and tenth centuries—whose heroes, Heraclius, Leo III., and Basil II., may hold their own with the greatest rulers of ancient or of modern story.

The most urgent problem of all is to find an adequate name to describe the Empire of which Constantinople was the capital for at least a thousand years. Every one of the conventional names involves a confusion or misrepresentation, great or small. 'Lower Empire'—'Greek Empire'—'Byzantine Empire'—'Eastern Empire'—'Later Empire'—'Roman Empire'—either suggest a wrong idea, or fail to express the true idea in full. In what sense was the empire at Constantinople 'Lower'? It certainly regarded itself as infinitely higher; an advance even upon the classical Roman Empire. Justinian with justice holds his rule to be above that of Aurelian and Diocletian; and from his day to the age of the great Charles, there was no power in Europe which could compare for a moment with the Roman Empire of the Bosphorus. The Empire was not 'Greek,' even in tongue, until the seventh century; it was not Greek in spirit until the twelfth century; till then hardly any of its emperors, soldiers, or chiefs had been Greek; and it was never quite Greek by race. If we say 'Byzantine' Empire, we are localising a power which was curiously composite in race, nationality, character, and tradition; and the term 'Byzantine' has a sense too directly contrary to Roman, and also has acquired a derogatory meaning. The great heroes of the empire are utterly unlike what men now understand by 'Byzantine'; and there could hardly be a more violent contrast than that between the Alexius or Bryennius of Sir Walter Scott's romance and the Nicephorus Phocas or Basil II. of actual history. 'Eastern Empire' is erroneous and ambiguous; for it suggests a break with Rome, and it applies to the kingdoms of Persians, Saracens, or Ottomans, to the Sultan of Roum, or the Emperors of Nicæa and Trebizond. 'Roman Empire' is accurate in a sense. But in the fourth and fifth centuries there were often two co-ordinate governments; and after the coronation of Charlemagne, in 800 A.D., there were always two Roman Empires, and sometimes more. The term, 'Later Roman Empire,' which Mr. Bury adopts, is far better; but it might be applied to Valentinian III., or to Romulus Augustulus; and it fails to suggest the continuance of the Empire for a thousand years. After the coronation of Charles, the term, 'Later Roman Empire,' is inadequate; and yet that event marks no essential break in the Empire at Constantinople.

What we want is a term which will describe the continuity of the Roman Empire, after its seat had been permanently removed to the Bosphorus, and yet distinguish it from the revived Empire of Charles, the Holy Roman Empire, and all other powers which claimed a title from Rome. The features to be connoted are the prolongation and evolution of the vast political organism of Augustus and Trajan, its unbroken continuity, at any rate, down to the thirteenth century, and the dominant material fact that its permanent centre of government was transferred to the Bosphorus: that it had become Christian, but not Catholic. We go wrong if we drop the title 'Roman'; we go wrong if we ignore the fact of the transfer of sovereignty to Constantinople; we go wrong if we fail to mark how much this implied, both in the spiritual and the political sphere. Under the conditions, the proper title is, 'The Roman Empire at Constantinople.' This is strictly accurate and fairly complete. It denotes the whole period of eleven centuries which separates the first

Constantine from the last. It is impossible to suppose it applied either to Romulus Augustulus, Charlemagne, or Otto. And it defines the unbroken continuity of government from its permanent seat on the Bosphorus. A simpler equivalent would be — the Empire of New Rome.

The next problem is to group the epochs of this immense succession of eleven centuries; to show their diversity in the midst of continuity; to distinguish the true periods of greatness and of growth, and the real eras of corruption and decay. Unfortunately this is what Gibbon has omitted to do, what he has even done not a little to make difficult. Of his eight octavo volumes five are devoted to the history of about five centuries, and three only are given to the remaining eight centuries. He himself was struck with the apparent paradox, which he seems to excuse (at the opening of his 48th chapter) by his own and the reader's fatigue in the melancholy task of recording the annals of the Eastern Empire. The genius of the greatest of historians has been betrayed into no error more capital than that which led him to describe the annals of the Empire from Heraclius to the last Constantine as 'a tedious and uniform tale of weakness and misery.' Gibbon, it is plain, was partly misled by the dearth of writings, and partly overwhelmed by the enormous scale of his ever-enlarging survey. But with all that we now have at hand, it is wonderful to think that he was ever tempted to abandon 'the Greek slaves and their servile historians.' If this is a description of the Iconoclasts and the Basils, Leo the Deacon and Nicetas, language must have a new meaning. In truth, 'a tedious tale of weakness' would be as aptly applied to the lives of William the Conqueror and the Plantagenet kings as to the exploits and adventures of Leo III., Constantine V., the two Basils, Nicephorus Phocas, John Zimisces, Kalo-Joannes, and Manuel.

Even in the matter of literary culture and pure Greek, we are apt to compare the Byzantine historians with classical or with our modern authors. Clearly we ought to compare them with their contemporaries in Europe. The iambics in which George of Pisidia celebrated the exploits of Heraclius, or those in which the Deacon Theodosius sang the recovery of Crete by Nicephorus Phocas, are not classical, but rather frigid as poetry; yet they are far less barbarous than any Latin poetry of the seventh and tenth centuries. The Greek of Leo the Deacon in the tenth century does not differ from Xenophon's, from whom he is separated by more than thirteen centuries, so much as the English of Langland differs from that of Milton. The prolongation of the Greek language over 2800 years from Homer to Tricoupi, its continual epochs of revival, purification, and ultimate return upon its own classical type, are among the most extraordinary facts in the evolution of human thought. And the persistence of the same written literature at Constantinople for at least twenty centuries is without parallel, at least in Europe.

Happily our most recent historians are in the main agreed as to the essential epochs and the true heroes of Byzantine history. It is agreed that from the age of Justinian to the Crusades the traditions of law, administration, Greek literature, commerce, and artistic manufactures were mainly preserved to Europe by the Roman Empire of the Bosphorus. It is agreed that for all active ends the Empire was extinguished by the Fourth Crusade, and had long been in an exhausted condition even at the opening of the First Crusade. The Isaurian and Basilian dynasties, that is the eighth, ninth, tenth, and part of the eleventh centuries, were epochs on the whole of valour, able government, prosperity, and civilisation, if compared with the condition of what used to be called the dark ages of

Europe. These centuries, with the reigns of Justinian and Heraclius in the sixth and seventh centuries, constitute an epoch which is worthy to rank with the Roman Empire from Julius to Theodosius on the one hand, and on the other with the Holy Roman Empire from Otto the Great to Frederick II. The Roman Empire of Charlemagne, the Holy Roman Empire of Otto, both in substance and in ceremonial, were much more truly imitations and rivals of the Roman Empire of the Bosphorus than they were revivals of the State of Augustus and Trajan; of whom all real memory was entirely lost in the eighth century, whom, as heathens without the semblance of Church or Patriarch, it was impossible that Franks and Saxons should imitate or approve.

At the close of his second volume Professor Bury sums up the function of the later Roman Empire under the five following heads, of which his whole work is an illustration and commentary:—

1. It was the bulwark of Europe against the Asiatic danger;
2. It kept alive Greek and Roman culture;
3. It maintained European commerce;
4. It preserved the idea of the Roman Empire;
5. It embodied a principle of permanence.

To these may be added the following:—

(*a*) It was the direct source of civilisation to the whole of the Balkan peninsula, and to all Europe east of the Vistula and the Carpathians;

(*b*) It was the type of a State Church—a spiritual power dependent on and co-operating with the sovereign power, and not, like the Catholic Church, independent and often antagonistic.

The Empire of New Rome did much more than preserve the idea of the Roman Empire. It prolonged the Roman Empire itself in a new, and even in some respects, a more developed form. As Mr. Freeman well puts it, 'the Eastern Empire is the surest witness to the unity of history,' the most complete answer to the conventional opposition between 'ancient' and 'modern' history. That mysterious gulf — that unexplained paralysis — which, we are told, occurred in the history of European civilisation about the fifth century, and was hardly removed by the ninth or tenth, has no existence whatever if we trace the internal condition of New Rome from the age of Theodosius to the age of Basil II.

We are so greatly influenced by literary standards and classical art that we hasten to condemn an age in which we find these decay. It is quite true that pure Latinity, elegant Greek, and Attic art were not to be found in New Rome, and seemed to have perished with the coming of the Huns and the Goths. But this did not form the whole of civilisation or even the bulk of it. In many things the civilisation of the Byzantine Empire was far higher than the civilisation of the Augustan Empire. The Court of Justinian or of Leo III., or of Irene, of Theophilus, of Basil I., or Constantine Porphyrogennetus, would have been considered in the Middle Ages far more like civilised life than the courts of Nero, Hadrian, or Diocletian. In many of the most essential features of civil administration, the governments of Justinian, of the Iconoclast and Macedonian dynasties, were really (in spite of barbarous punishments, tyranny, and extortion) a great improvement on the imperialism of the Cæsars on the Tiber.

Obviously the religious, moral, and domestic life — bad as it was from our standard — was better than that which is described by Juvenal and Tacitus, and was better than that of the greater part of Europe in the centuries between the fifth and the tenth. And in matters of taste, it is plain that those only can speak of the 'servile debasement' of Byzantine art who have never traced the influence upon Europe of the industries, manufactures, inventions, and arts, which had their seat in Constantinople, who have not studied descriptions of the great Palace beside the Hippodrome, of the Boucoleon and Blachernæ, and who know nothing of S. Sophia, S. Irene, SS. Sergius and Bacchus, the Church Tes Choras, and all the remains of architectural and decorative skill that extend in unbroken series from the age of Justinian to the Crusades. The vast administrative, legal, and military organisation of Augustus and Trajan no more perished in the sack of Rome than did the language, the culture, and the æsthetic aptitude of the Greco-Roman world. Both took new forms; they did not perish.

After all that has been done by Finlay, Freeman, Bury, and Pears within the last generation, as well as by scholars in other countries, it is impossible to doubt that this is henceforth one of the cardinal truths of European history. Mr. Bury's five propositions as to the functions of the later Roman Empire are perfectly true, and may be emphasised and extended rather than qualified or diminished. What we now especially need is to have it explained in detail how these results came about. We want the inner, economic, social, bureaucratic, industrial, and ecclesiastical history of the Empire — not so much its court annals or its dynastic revolutions. We have had the imperial and political history traced in sufficient fulness; the administrative and organic life of the society is what we now need to grasp and explore. This is obviously a most complex and difficult task, only to be achieved by indirect means and the study of a variety of sources. The art, the industry, the trade, the manners, the statistics, the law, the theology, the political and civic institutions of the Roman Empire from the age of Heraclius to that of the Comneni is what we now need to explore. And it is a field in which English scholars, apart from Finlay, Bury, and some theologians, have done little.

Especially we need a *History of Byzantine Christianity*, written in the spirit of Milman — from the point of view of an enlightened historian and not of an official Churchman. Almost everything that we have yet got on the subject of the Byzantine Church is insensibly coloured by the Catholic or anti-Catholic bias. A history of Byzantine art, of Byzantine literature and language, of Byzantine manners, commerce, law, and municipal organisation as these existed between Justinian and Basil, 'the slayer of Bulgarians' — a period of five centuries — would enable us to answer the enigma of Constantinople. On the continent Krause, Heyd, Hopf, Gfrörer, Salzenburg, Mordtmann, Rambaud, Sabatier, de Saulcy, Labarte, Schlumberger, Bayet, Drapeyron, de Muralt, Riant, as well as many Greek, Russian, and Oriental scholars, have worked in these mines. Mr. Oman has given us a useful summary of Byzantine history in the series called *The Story of the Nations*. But in England, since Finlay, we have had little of original work except from Mr. Bury, who has yet not gone further than the eighth century. The most interesting and perhaps the most obscure period of all is the Basilian dynasty, from A.D. 867–1057. And on this we sorely need accessible guidance. All that Gibbon has to tell us of these two hundred years is contained in about one hundred pages, and Finlay has compressed his narrative into rather more than twice that space.

When we have completely explored these various subjects we may be able to answer the problems: (1) How did the Roman Empire maintain itself at Constantinople for eleven centuries? (2) Why was it able for eight centuries to resist not only the Western but the Eastern invasions, before which every other city and kingdom fell? (3) Why was Constantinople for five centuries the most populous, wealthy, and civilised city in Europe?

The answer in general is a somewhat complicated one of several terms. First, the Roman Empire removed itself to the strongest and most dominant spot in all Europe. Next, it evolved a wholly new organisation: centralised, legalised, and industrial. It founded the most wonderful bureaucracy ever known. It developed a maritime ascendency, and a world-wide commerce. It eliminated every vestige of provincial, national, and race prejudice, and called every subject man from Sicily to the Euphrates a Roman and nothing else. And lastly, and perhaps mainly, it became the first, and for ages the only, Christian Empire, having a powerful Church, which was its faithful and loyal instrument, on whose mysterious prestige it rested, and which it always treated as part of itself.

1. Nothing further need be said as to the unique source of strength, both for offence and for defence, which the genius of Constantine discovered on the Bosphorus. The removal of the seat of empire from the Tiber to the Bosphorus was the only mode in which the Empire could have been preserved, whilst, at the same time, this made possible its political, religious, and moral transformation. The exact steps, details, and ultimate type of this transformation are precisely the points on which we need light. We see the stupendous machine which this bureaucracy and State Church became, but we know very little about its actual working and its inner life. We judge its power by results only, and by the startling paradox that the machinery of a most disparate organism goes on working undis-

turbed by fatuity, strife, and anarchy in the supreme centre. Whatever the vices and follies which raged in the imperial palaces for generations together, disciplined and well-armed troops, powerful navies, military engines and stores, skilful generals, able governors, and expert diplomatists, rise up time after time in infinite succession to save the empire, hold it together, restore its losses, and increase its wealth, and this over the whole period of eight centuries from Theodosius to Isaac Angelus.

2. The material source of this strength in the empire was primarily its sea-power and its command for five centuries of the commerce of the whole Mediterranean. When we study the campaigns of Heraclius and of Nicephorus, when we follow in Leo the Deacon the great expedition to recover Crete, we are struck with the vast maritime resources, the engines and ships of scientific war which the empire possessed in the seventh and tenth centuries. Nothing in Europe at that date could produce any such sea-power. As Nicephorus Phocas very fairly told the angry envoy of Otto, he could lay in ashes any sea-board town of the Mediterranean. When the cities of Italy succeeded to the commerce of Constantinople, they held it in shares and fought for it amongst themselves. But until the rise of Venice, Pisa, and Palermo, Constantinople ruled the seas from Sicily to Rhodes, and relatively to her contemporaries with a far more complete supremacy.

3. It was this maritime ascendency, this central position in the Bosphorus, and this vast Mediterranean commerce which was the foundation of the wealth of the empire — a wealth which, relatively to its age, exceeded even the wealth and maritime ascendency of England in our day, which for eight centuries hardly ever suffered a collapse, and was continually being renewed. We must discount the petulant sneers of the irritable Bishop Luitprand, when

baffled by the fierce Nicephorus. The silk industry, the embroidery, the mosaic, the enamel, the metal work, the ivory carving, the architecture, the military engineering, the artillery, the marine appliances, the shipbuilding art; the trade in corn, spices, oil, and wine; the manuscripts, the illuminations of Byzantium, far surpassed anything else in Europe to be found in the epoch between the reign of Justinian and the rise of the Italian cities. Much of what we call mediæval art decoration and art fabrics had their real origin, both industrial and æsthetic, on the Bosphorus, or were carried on there as their metropolitan centre.

Nowhere else in Europe under the successors of Clovis and Charlemagne could such churches have been raised as those of the Holy Wisdom and Irene, such palaces as that beside the Hippodrome or the Boucoleon, such mighty fortifications as those which stretched from Blachernæ to the Propontis. Nowhere could Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries produce such enormous wealth as that possessed by Theophilus, Basil I., or Constantine Porphyrogennetus, or equip such fleets and armies as those of Nicephorus, John Zimisces, and Basil II. We are accustomed to compare the art and the civilisation of the Byzantine Empire with those of much later ages than its own, mainly because we have nothing else wherewith to compare it of its own epoch. If we honestly set it against the contemporary state of Europe, from the era of Justinian to that of the Crusades, it will be seen to be not only supreme in the traditions of civilisation, but almost to stand alone. In the eleventh century, without doubt, Western Europe was organised, and began its triumphant career, with the Catholic Church and the feudal organism in full development; and from that date the Byzantine Empire ceased to be pre-eminent. But its vast resources and the splendour and civilised arts of Constantinople still continued to amaze the Crusaders, even down to the thirteenth century.

The fact is that, for the five centuries from Justinian to Isaac Comnenus, the attacks on the empire, from the European side, at any rate, were the attacks of nomad, unorganised, and uncivilised races on a civilised and highly-organised empire. And in spite of anarchy, corruption, and effeminacy at the Byzantine court, civilisation and wealth told in every contest. Greek fire, military science, enormous resources, and the prestige of empire always bore down wild valour and predatory enthusiasm. Just as Russia dominates the Turkoman tribes of Central Asia, as Turkey holds back the valiant Arabs of her eastern frontier, as Egyptian natives with British officers easily master the heroic Ghazis of the Soudan — so the Roman Empire on the Bosphorus beat back Huns, Avars, Persians, Slaves, Bulgarians, Patzinaks, and Russians. We need only to study the history of Russia and of Turkey to learn how the organising ability, the resources, and material arts of great empires outweigh folly, vice, and corruption in the palace.

4. Of course a succession of victorious campaigns implies a succession of valiant armies ; and there is nothing on which we need more light than on the exact organisation and national constituents of those Roman armies which crushed Chosroes, Muaviah, Crumn, Samuel, and Hamdanids. They are called conventionally ‘Greeks’; but during the Heraclian, Isaurian, and Basilian dynasties there seem to have been no Greeks at all in the land forces. The armies were always composed of a strange collection of races, with different languages, arms, methods of fighting, and types of civilisation. They were often magnificent and courageous barbarians, conspicuous amongst whom were Scandinavians and English, and with them

some of the most warlike braves of Asia and of Europe. The empire made no attempt to destroy their national characteristics, to discourage their native language, religion, or habits. Each force was told off to the service which suited it best, and was trained in the use of its proper weapons. They remained distinct from each other, and wholly distinct from the civil population. But as they could not unite, they seldom became so great a danger to the empire as the Prætorian guard of the Roman army. The organisation and management of such a heterogeneous body of mercenary braves required extraordinary skill ; but it was just this skill which the rulers of Byzantium possessed. The bond of the whole was the tradition of discipline and the consciousness of serving the Roman Emperor.

The modern history of Russia and still more the native armies of the British Empire will enable us to understand how the work of consolidation was effected. The Queen's dominions are at this hour defended by men of almost every race, colour, language, religion, costume, and habits. And we may imagine the composite character of the Byzantine armies, if we reflect how distant wars are carried on in the name of Victoria by Hindoos, Musulmans, Pathans, Ghoorkas, Afghans, Egyptians, Soudanese, Zanzibaris, Negroes, Nubians, Zulus, Kaffirs, and West Indians, using their native languages, retaining their national habits, and, to a great extent, their native costume. The Roman Empire was maintained from its centre on the Bosphorus, somewhat as the British Empire is maintained from its centre on the Thames, by wealth, maritime ascendency, the traditions of empire, and organising capacity — always with the great difference that there was no purely Roman nucleus as there is a purely British nucleus, and also that the soldiery of the Roman Empire had no common armament, and was not officered by men of the dominant race, but by capable leaders indifferently picked from any race, except the Latin or the Greek. Dominant race there was none; nation there was none. Roman meant subject of the Emperor; Emperor meant the chief in the vermilion buskins, installed in the Palace on the Bosphorus, and duly crowned by the Orthodox Patriarch in the Church of the Holy Wisdom.

5. Here we reach the last, as I venture to think, the main element of strength in the Empire of New Rome — its alliance with, or rather its possession of, the Orthodox Church. The Roman Empire at Constantinople was really, if not in style, a Holy Roman Empire. The Patriarch was one of its officials. The venerable Church of the Holy Wisdom was almost the private chapel of the Emperor; the Emperor's palace may almost be described as the Vatican of Byzantium. The relations between the Emperor and the Patriarch were wholly different from the relations between the Emperor at Aachen and the Pope. Instead of being separated by a thousand miles and many tribes and peoples, the Emperor of the Bosphorus resided in the same group of buildings, worshipped, and was adored in the same metropolitan temple, and sat in the same council-hall with his Patriarch, who was practically one of his great officers of State. All students of the Carolingian or of the Holy Roman Empire know how immensely Pipin, Charles, the Henries, and the Ottos were strengthened by the support of the Popes from Zacharias to Victor II. But the Papacy was a very intermittent, uncertain, and exacting bulwark of the Empire, and after the advent of Hildebrand, in the eleventh century, it was usually the open or secret enemy of the Empire. The Catholic Church was always the co-equal, usually the jealous rival, often the irreconcilable foe of the Emperor. It never was a State

Church, and rarely, until the fourteenth century, was an official and obsequious minister of any emperor or king.

But the Orthodox Church of Constantinople, from first to last, was a State Church, part of the State, servant of the State. There were, of course, rebel patriarchs, ambitious, independent, factious, and deeply spiritual patriarchs. There were whole reigns and dynasties when Emperor and Patriarch represented opposite opinions. But all this was trifling compared with the independent and hostile attitude of the Papacy to the Temporal Power. The Catholic Church represented a Spiritual Power independent of any sovereign, with a range of influence not conterminous with that of any sovereign. That was its strength, its glory, its menace to the Temporal Power. The Orthodox Church represented a spiritual authority, the minister of the sovereign, directing the conscience of the subjects of the sovereign, and in theory of no others. The Orthodox Church was the ideal State Church, and for a thousand years it deeply affected the history of the Byzantine Empire for evil and for good. It more than realised Dante's dream in the *De Monarchia*, a dream which the essence of Catholicism and the traditions of the Papacy made impossible in the West. It constituted a real and not a titular Holy Roman Empire in the East.

Ruinous to religion, morality, and freedom as was this dependence of Church on the sovereign, it gave the sovereign an immense and permanent strength. We can see to-day what overwhelming force is given to the rulers of the two great empires of Eastern Europe, who are both absolute heads of the religious organisation of their respective dominions. Now the Orthodox Church of the Byzantine Empire was a more powerful spiritual authority than the Russian Church, if not quite so abject a servant of the Roman Emperor as the Russian Church is of the

Czar. And it was no doubt much more completely under the control of the Emperor than the imâms and softas of Stamboul are under the control of the Padishah. The Roman Emperor, in spite of his vices, origin, or character, even in the midst of the Iconoclast struggle, was invested in the eyes of his Orthodox subjects with that sacred halo which still surrounds Czar and Sultan, and which is the main source of their autocratic power. It was this sacred character, a character which the *de facto* Emperor possessed from the hour of his coronation in St. Sophia until the day when he died, was deposed, or blinded, which held together an empire of such strangely heterogeneous elements, permeated with such forces of anarchy and confusion. Christians in the West contemn, and perhaps with justice, the servility, idolatry, and formalism of the Greek priesthood. They may be right when they tell us that the essence of Greek ritualism is only a debased kind of paganism. But the Orthodox Church is still a great political force ; and in the Byzantine Empire it was a political force perhaps greater than any other of which we have extant examples.

If, then, we have to answer the historical problem — how was it that the Roman Empire succeeded in prolonging its existence for a thousand years after its final transfer to the Bosphorus, in the face of tremendous and, it seemed, insurmountable difficulties ? — the answer is, by a happy combination of three concurrent forces. The first was the prestige of the name and traditions of Rome. The second was the wonderful language of Hellas, and the versatility and astuteness of the Greek genius. The third was the organisation of an Orthodox Church, which, on the one hand, had a hold over the mass of the people hardly ever acquired even by the Church Catholic, which, on the other hand, was willing to become the faithful minister of an empire that it consecrated and venerated as its supreme master on earth. In one sense the empire was not strictly Roman, not Greek, not Holy. But by a marvellous combination of Roman tradition, Greek genius, and Orthodox sanctity it maintained itself erect for a thousand years.

II. *The Political Problem.*

The modern political problem presented by Constantinople is not in the least yet solved; time has not removed it; and recent events have not made it easier. Constantinople still remains, and ever must remain, one of the most important ports in the whole world. In the hands of a great military and naval power, it must always be one of the most dominant capital cities in the whole world. All that Cronstadt is in the Baltic, or Gibraltar in the Western, or Toulon in the Northern, or Malta in the Southern, Mediterranean — all these together and more — Constantinople might be made by a first-class power. Colonel F. V. Greene, of the United States Army, in his *Russian Campaigns in Turkey*, 1877–78, speaking of the first lines of Turkish defence, between the Black Sea at Lake Derkos and the Sea of Marmora, calls this position (nearly that of the wall of Anastasius in the fifth century) 'a place of vastly greater strength than Plevna.' He adds: 'No other capital in the world possesses such a line of defence, and when completed, armed, and garrisoned in sufficient strength (about seventy-five thousand men), it may fairly be deemed impregnable, except to a nation possessing a navy capable of controlling the Black Sea and Sea of Marmora, and a fleet of transports sufficient to land troops in rear of its flanks.' (Pp. 427, 428.) That is to say, in the opinion of one of the first of living authorities, who followed the Russian staff in the last war, Constantinople is practically impregnable in the hands of a first-class *military and naval power.*

But Constantinople is not merely impregnable on the defensive side, in the hands of such a power, but if adequately manned and equipped, it is equally strong for offensive purposes; and, with the Bosphorus and the Hellespont duly fortified, it would command the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmora, and the Ægean Sea. Much more than this: it would practically dominate Asia Minor; for, as old Busbecq says, 'Constantinople stands in Europe, but it faces Asia.' It faces Asia, and it dominates Asia Minor; and, if possessed by a first-class military and naval power of ambitious and aggressive spirit, the possession of Constantinople involves the practical control of Asia Minor, of the entire Levant, and, but for Cyprus and Malta, of North Africa and the whole Syrian coast.

Nor is this all. In the hands of a first-class military and naval power, Constantinople must dominate the Balkan peninsula and the whole of Greece. With an impregnable capital, and the powerful navy which the wonderful marine opportunities of Constantinople render an inevitable possession to any great power, the rival races and petty kingdoms of the peninsula would all alike become mere dependencies or provinces. Here, then, we reach the full limit of the possible issue. Turkey is now no longer a maritime power of any account. Her magnificent soldiery forms no longer a menace to any European power, however small; and, if it suffices to hold the lines of Constantinople on the Balkan side (which is not absolutely certain), it is liable at any moment to be paralysed by an enemy on the flank who could command the Black Sea or the Sea of Marmora. Of course, the Bosphorus has lost its ancient importance as a defence; for a northern invader commanding the Black Sea could easily descend on the heights above Pera, and with Pera in the hands of an enemy, Stamboul is now indefensible. That is to say, Constantinople is no longer impregnable, or even defensible, without a first-class fleet. Therefore neither Turkey, nor Bulgaria, nor Greece, nor any other small power, could have any but a precarious hold on it, in the absence of a very powerful fleet of some ally.

From these conditions the following consequences result. Turkey can hold Constantinople as her capital with absolute security against any minor power. She could not hold it against Russia having a predominant fleet in the Black Sea, unless she received by alliance the support of a powerful navy. With the support of a powerful fleet, and her own reconstituted army and restored financial and administrative condition, she might hold Constantinople indefinitely against all the resources of Russia. It is perfectly plain that no minor power, even if placed in Stamboul, could hold it except by sufferance; certainly neither Bulgaria, nor Greece, nor Servia, perhaps hardly Austria, unless she enormously developed her fleet, and transformed her entire empire. Turkey, as planted at present on the Bosphorus, is not a menace to any other power. The powers with which she is surrounded are intensely jealous of each other; and by race, religion, traditions, and aspirations, incapable of permanent amalgamation.

From the national and religious side the problem is most complex and menacing. Even in Constantinople the Moslems are a minority of the population; and still more decidedly so in the other European provinces. But in most of the Asiatic provinces, Moslems are a majority, and in almost all they are enormously superior in effective strength to any other single community. To put aside Syrians, Arabs, Egyptians, Jews, and other non-Christian populations, there are, within the more western parts of the Turkish Empire, Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, various Slavonian peoples, Armenians, and Levantine Catholics, not so very unequally balanced in effective force and national ambition ; all intensely averse to submit to the control of any one amongst the rest, and unwilling to combine with each other. Each watches the other with jealousy, suspicion, antipathy, and insatiable desire to domineer.

The habit of five centuries and the hope of ultimate triumph lead all of them to submit, with continual outbreaks and outcries, to the qualified rule of the Turk. But place any one of this motley throng of nationalities in the place of the Sultan, and a general confusion would arise. The Greek would not accept the Bulgarian as his master, nor the Bulgarian the Greek ; the Albanians would submit to neither ; the Armenians would seize the first moment of striking in for themselves ; and the Italian and Levantine Catholics would certainly assert their claims. No one of all those rival nationalities, creeds, and populations could for a moment maintain their ascendency. No one of them has the smallest title either from tradition, numbers, or proved capacity, to pretend to the sceptre of the Bosphorus — and not one of them could hold it for a day against Russia, if she chose to take it.

Assume that Russia has succeeded Turkey in possession of Constantinople, the Bosphorus, and the Hellespont. What is the result ? She would immediately make her southern capital impregnable, as Colonel Greene says, 'with a line of defence such as no other capital in the world possesses.' She would make it stronger than Cronstadt or Sebastopol, and place there one of the most powerful arsenals in the world. With a great navy in sole command of the Euxine, the Bosphorus, the Marmora, and the Hellespont, with a vast expanse of inland waters within which she could be neither invested nor approached — for nothing would be easier than to make the Hellespont absolutely impassable — Russia would possess a marine base such as nothing else in Europe presents, such as nothing in European history records, except in the days of the Basilian dynasty and the Ottoman Caliphs of the sixteenth century. With such an unequalled naval base she would certainly require and easily secure a further marine arsenal in the Archipelago. It is of no consequence whether this was found on the Greek or on the Asiatic side. There are a score of suitable points. An island or a port situated somewhere in the Ægean Sea between Besika Bay and the Cyclades would be a necessary adjunct and an easy acquisition. With Russia having the sole command of the seas that wash South-Eastern Europe, dominating the whole south-eastern seaboard from a chain of arsenals stretching from Sebastopol to the Greek Archipelago, the entire condition of the Mediterranean would be transformed — let us say at once — the entire condition of Europe would be transformed.

Has the British public fully realised the enormous change in the political conditions of the whole Levant and of Europe involved in the installation of Russia on the Bosphorus? We are accustomed to treat the settlement of the Ottoman in Stamboul as a matter which is now of very minor importance. Why so? Because the Turk is powerless for anything but precarious defence, under the preponderant menace of Russia on the north, whilst he is hemmed in by ambitious and restless neighbours in his last ditch in the Balkan peninsula. He cannot fortify the Bosphorus without Russian interference; he cannot maintain his government in Crete without a roar of indignation from Greece. He is constantly harried by Bulgarians, Servians, Albanians, Montenegrins, and Epirots. He lives for ever on the defensive, he menaces no one; and no one is afraid of him in Europe — because he has nothing in Europe but a shrunken province, *and practically no fleet.*

We are accustomed, again, to treat the position of Russia in the Balkan peninsula as one of influence more or less continuous, but as not practically affecting the Eastern Mediterranean and its lands. Russia has not yet effected any real footing on the peninsula. She finds it occupied by Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, Austria, Turkey, and Greece. Over these Russia exercises an intermittent influence, but never controls them all at the same time; and she often finds one or more of them in direct opposition. Accordingly, we do not regard the Muscovite as dominant in the Balkan peninsula, much less in the Archipelago. But place Russia on the wonderful throne of the Bosphorus, with the inevitable addition of Adrianople and the Maritza Valley, at the very least, in Southern Roumelia, and the whole situation is transformed. The possession of Constantinople by Russia, with her enormous resources and grand navy, means the control by Russia of the Bosphorus, the Marmora, the Hellespont, and, at least, of South-Eastern Roumelia.

Could it stop there? Would the absolute chief of an army of two millions and a half, with the third great navy of the world, fall into slumber in his new and resplendent capital, rebuild the Seraglio, or amuse himself in Yildiz Kiosk? He would immediately create the second great navy of the world, and for all Mediterranean purposes his navy would be at least the rival of the first. How long would Roumania and Bulgaria remain their own masters when they found themselves between his countless legions on the Pruth and his great fleet in the Golden Horn? What would Servia say to the change — or Austria?

Would the Albanians be content? And what would become of the Musulmans in Roumelia? The prospect opens at least five or six international imbroglios with knotty problems of race, religion, patriotism, and political sympathies and antipathies. Any one of these is enough to cause a European crisis — and even an embittered war.

In the long run, though it might be a struggle prolonged for a century, Russia would in some form or other command or control the entire peninsula from the Danube to Cape Matapan; not, perhaps, counting it all strictly in Russian territory, but being dominant therein as is Victoria in the Indian peninsula. The geographical conditions of Constantinople are so extraordinary; they offer such boundless opportunities to a first-class military and naval power; they lie so curiously ready to promote the ambition of Russia, that the advent of the Czar to the capital of the Sultan would produce a change in Europe greater than any witnessed in the nineteenth century. The absolute monarch of a hundred millions, with an army of two and a half millions, possessing sole command of the Black Sea, Bosphorus, Marmora, and Hellespont, together with the incomparable naval basis which is afforded by this chain of four inland seas, would unquestionably be supreme master of the whole of Eastern Europe, which would then extend under one sceptre from the Arctic Ocean to the Greek Archipelago.

But this is only one-half of the political problem, and perhaps the less difficult half. There is the Asiatic side to the problem, as well as the European side. Place the Czar in the Seraglio and what is to become of the Padishah? Is he to retire to Scutari in his barge, and to restore the palace of Selim, which we know as hospital and barracks? Is he to withdraw to Brusa or Smyrna, or retire at once to Aleppo or Damascus? How long will the Russian be content to watch across the sea the minarets in Bithynia and the mountains of Anatolia, to look upon Abydos from Sestos without a desire to pay a visit to his secular rival? Politicians talk with a light heart of hastening the departure of the Moslem from Europe. But what do they propose for him when he is withdrawn into Asia? With the Czar at Kars, and under Ararat, at Constantinople and Gallipoli, commanding the whole northern coast of Asia Minor from Batum to Besika Bay, with the Armenians raging on the East and the Greeks and Levantine Christians on the West the Sultan will hardly rest more tranquilly in Brusa than he does to-day in Yildiz Kiosk. Are the millions of Musulmans in Asia Minor to be exterminated or driven across the Euphrates? What is to be the end of this interminable Turkish problem, and is the twentieth century to install a new crusade?

All these things are, no doubt, very distant and entirely uncertain. But they are possible enough, and would give the statesmen of the future a series of insoluble problems. It would be needless to enlarge on the endless complications they involve. They may serve to convince us that there is no finality in this Turkish question. The expulsion of the Turk from Europe leaves the dilemma more acute than ever. The enthronement of the Russian on the Bosphorus settles nothing, concludes nothing, and can satisfy no one. It offers, on the contrary, a new set of difficulties and contests, more ominous and bitter than those which have raged for a hundred years since Catherine II.

CHAPTER XIII.

PARIS AS AN HISTORIC CITY.

Of historic cities in Europe of the first rank we can count but four: Rome, Constantinople, Paris, London. For in the first rank of historic cities we can only place those capitals which have been, continuously and over a long succession of ages, the seats of national movements dominating the history of Europe: cities which have been conspicuous in mass, in central place, and in vast extent of time. Rome first, Constantinople next, stand far before all other European cities in fulfilling these conditions: but after them come Paris and London. Such fascinating cities as Athens, Florence, Venice, Rouen, Cologne, Treves, Prague, or Oxford — are all either far inferior in size and national importance, or else have known their epochs of glory only to die away for ages into small and local pre-eminence. Of all great capitals in the world, London has perhaps, during twelve centuries, suffered the least from violent shocks, from war and breaks in its history; and it may be said to retain the most complete and continuous monumental record for that period.

In the modern world, Paris is the only capital which can be placed beside London as an historic city of the first rank. The modern transformation of Paris has been even more destructive of the past than the modern transformation of London, and, at the same time, it is much more brilliant: so that what remains of the historic city is much more completely screened and overpowered in Paris than it is in London. Nor has Paris any ancient monuments which appeal to the popular imagination, with such direct voice as do our Abbey, and our great hall at Westminster, our Tower, our Temple Church, Lambeth Palace, and the Guildhall. Yet withal it may be said that, in a larger sense of the term, Paris is a city of even richer historic memories than London itself: richer, that is, to the thoughtful student of its history, though certainly not to the incurious tourist. If we take into account *sites* as well as extant monuments, if we call to our aid topography as well as archæology; if we follow up the early history of buildings which have been replaced, or are now transformed or removed; if we study the local biography of Paris from the days of Julius Cæsar to the days of Julius Grévy and Sadi Carnot — especially, if we include in the history of Paris that of its suburbs — St. Denis, Vincennes, St. Cloud, St. Germain, Versailles, — then the history of Paris is even richer, more dramatic, more continuous than that of London itself.

Paris is by at least a century older than London in the historical record; for it now has almost two thousand years of continuous annals. Paris was a more important Roman city than London. It has far more extensive Roman remains. The history of its first thousand years, from the first century to the eleventh, of its early foundations, churches, palaces, and walls, is far more complete and trustworthy than anything we know of London. It did not suffer any such gap or blank in its history, such as that which befell London, from the time of the Romans until the settlement of the Saxons. The fathers of men still living have seen at Paris, in its Bastille, at St. Denis, in Notre Dame, and the other churches, in the Tuileries, in Versailles, and old Hôtel de Ville, relics of the past, records, works of art, tombs, and statues, before which the great record of our Abbey and our Tower can hardly hold their own.

The great era of destruction began little more than a century ago: the great era of restoration little more than half a century ago. Paris, too, has been the scene of events more tremendous and more extraordinary than any other city of the world, if we except Constantinople and Rome. London never endured any very serious or regular siege. Paris has endured a dozen famous sieges, culminating in what is, perhaps, the biggest siege recorded in history. London has never known an autocrat with a passion for building, has had but one great conflagration, and but one serious insurrection. Paris has had in Louis XIV., and the first and second empires of the Napoleons, three of the most ambitious despots ever known; and in a hundred years has had four most sanguinary and destructive revolutions. Battles, sieges, massacres, conflagrations, civil wars, rebellions, revolutions, make up the history of Paris from the days of the Cæsars and the Franks to the days of the Terror and the Commune.

All this makes the topographical history of Paris far more copious and more stirring than the history of London, and indeed of any other modern city whatever. And the history of Paris has been far better told than the history of any other city. There is a perfect library about the history of Paris, with a special Museum, and a collection of 80,000 volumes and 70,000 engravings, devoted to that one subject. The histories reach over six centuries, from the work of Jean de Jandun, the contemporary of Dante, who begins his work about Paris by saying 'that it is more like Paradise than any other spot on earth' — (an opinion, by the way, said to be shared by many Americans and some English) — and they go on to the splendid volumes by Hoffbauer, Fournier, and others, called *Paris à travers* *les âges:* a book, I may say, only to be found in the British Museum and a few public libraries. Till the appearance of Mr. Loftie's *History of London* (2 vols. 1883), we had not a single scholarly history of our great city. But for more than two centuries there have been produced a long series of works on the topography and monuments of Paris. And we have now a splendid series of treatises issued by the Municipal Council, the *Histoire Générale de Paris,* begun in 1865. When I was on the London County Council, I endeavoured to induce the Council to undertake a similar work for London; but I found that, with an annual expenditure of some two millions, the Municipality of London had no power to expend a penny on such an object.[1]

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[1] Amongst other valuable books of history and illustration are: Androuet du Cerceau, *Les plus excellents Bastiments de France,* 2 vols. fol. Paris, 1576.

Israel Silvestre, *Views in old Paris,* fol. Paris, 1665.

Perelle, *Les délices de Paris,* fol. Paris, 1763.

Piganiol, *Description de Paris.* Paris, 1742.

Dulaure, *Histoire de Paris,* 10 vols. 8vo. Paris (2nd ed.), 1823, with views and maps.

De Guilhermy, *Itinéraire archéologique de Paris,* 1855.

Lacroix, *Curiosités de la Ville de Paris.*

Pernot, *Le Vieux Paris,* fol. 1838.

A. P. Martial, *Ancien Paris,* a series of 300 etchings. Paris, fol. 1866.

D. R. Rochette, *Souvenirs du Vieux Paris.* Paris, 1836, fol.

Destailleurs (Hippolyte), *Recueil d'Estampes.* Paris, fol. 1863, reproductions.

C. Chastillon, *Topographie Française,* 1612.

J. B. Rigaud, *Recueil Choisi,* 1750.

P. G. Hamerton, *Paris, Old and New,* 4to, 1885.

Albert Lenoir, *Statistique Monumentale de Paris,* 1861–1875.

S. Sophia Beale, *The Churches of Paris from Clovis to Charles X.,* 8vo, 1893.

The Publications of the *Société de l'histoire de Paris,* annual volumes, 1874–1894.

For purely popular books there are, *Old and New Paris,* by Sutherland Edwards, now publishing by Cassell and Co. in parts, 1893–94.

A. Hare, *Paris* 1887; and, lastly, there is a fair historical account in Joanne's illustrated popular *Guide to Paris.*

With all this prodigious wealth of historic record beneath our feet as we tread over old Paris, how little do we think of any part of it, as we stroll about new Paris of to-day. We lounge along the boulevards, the quays and 'places,' with thoughts intent on galleries and gardens, theatres and shops, thinking as little of the past history of the ground we tread as a fly crawling over a picture by Raphael thinks of high art. Haussmann, and the galleries, the Boulevards, and the opera smother up the story of Paris, much as a fair with its booth, scaffoldings, and advertisements masks the old buildings round some mediæval market-place. *Ceci tuera cela*, said Victor Hugo of the book and the Cathedral. No! it is not the book which has killed old Paris. It is Haussmann and his imitators, the architectural destroyers, restorers, and æsthetic Huns and Vandals. Not that we deny to Haussmannised Paris some delightful visions, many brilliant, some even beautiful effects. But to most foreign visitors, and perhaps to most modern Parisians, Haussmann has buried old Paris both actually and morally — hiding it behind a screen, disguising it with new imitation work, or dazzling the eye till it loses all sense of beauty in the old work.

The effort to recall old Paris when we stand in new Paris certainly imposes a strain on the imagination. When we stand on some bright morning in early summer in the *Place de la Concorde* whilst all is gaiety and life, children playing in the gardens, the fountains sparkling in the sun, and long vistas of white stone glistening in the light, with towers, spires, terraces, and bridges in long perspective, and the golden cross high over the dome of the *Invalides*, it is not easy to recall the aspect of the spot we stand on when it was soaked with the blood of the victims of the guillotine from King and Queen to Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday; we forget that every tower and terrace we look on has resounded to the roar of cannon and the shouts of battle, with fire and smoke, with all the forces of destruction and all the passions of hell — not once or twice but repeatedly for a century; nay, how the same scenes of carnage and of battle have raged through Revolution and Fronde, League and St. Bartholomew, and English wars and feudal faction fights back to the days of Counts of Paris, and Franks, Huns, Gauls, and Romans. And after all these storms, the city still smiles on us as a miracle of gaiety, brightness, industry, and culture, keeping some scar, or remnant, or sign of every tempest it has witnessed.

It has happened to us at times to stand on some beautiful coast on one of those lovely days which succeed a storm, when ripples dance along the blue and waveless sea, whilst the glassy water gently laps the pebbled beach, and yet but a few hours before we have seen that same coast lashed into foam, whilst wild billows swept into the abyss precious things and priceless lives of men. So I often think Paris looks in its brightness and calm a few short years after one of her convulsions; fulfilling her ancient motto — *fluctuat nec mergitur.* Her bark rides upon every billow and does not sink. Fresh triumphs of industry and art and knowledge follow upon her wildest storm.

It is the history, not the present aspect of Paris, that is my present subject. I can remember Paris before the second empire began, before the new Boulevards, the strategical avenues, the interminable strait lines and the mechanical restorations of the last forty years; I can recall Paris in the days when it was for the most part a labyrinth of narrow, short, and often winding streets, with the sombre *impasses*, the irregular courts, and vistas of gable, attic, cornice, and turret that Méryon loved so well, and which Israel Silvestre has recorded with such patient care, and here and there a Gothic fragment in the simple state of natural decay and gradual incrustation. Since then I have watched for forty years the process of demolition and of restoration — the destruction, construction, reconstruction, on which such enormous sums, so much energy and skill, have been bestowed. I will try to avoid the dangerous field of art, of archæology, of criticism and taste, treading my way warily *per ignes suppositos cineri doloso.* I will offer no opinion on these high matters of æsthetic judgment. Let every man and woman judge for himself and herself whether new Paris be more beautiful than old Paris, if Haussmann had a finer genius than Pierre de Montereau and Philibert Delorme, if symmetrical boulevards and spacious avenues are a nobler sight than picturesque alleys — how far old buildings in decay should be 'restored,' and if it is good to sweep away whole parishes, churches, halls, mansions, and streets by the dozen, in order to make a barrack or a '*place*.' There is much to be said on both sides of the question : but I shall hold my peace on these profound æsthetic problems, for it is safer to interfere as arbiter in a dog-fight than to venture as umpire into the battle of the styles. My task is the plainer and humbler one of topography and the historic record. And my historic interests are impartial. I am seeking only to identify all memorable events of the past with their true local association. To my mind, the historic record covers all memorable things, all conspicuous names in the long evolution of the ages.

I have in Paris an old and learned friend who for fifty years has lived in Paris, studied Paris, loved Paris, as only a Parisian can love his own city. His habit is to read every book he can meet with that relates to the topography of Paris, and then he walks about and verifies what he reads on the spot. I often stroll about the city with my friend and listen to him as he pours out volumes of topographic lore. We pass through the modern screen of Haussmannic Paris: we leave the boulevards and their roar, and in a moment we are again in the old world of the eighteenth or seventeenth century; just as when we turn out from Victoria Street into Deans' Yard and the Abbey Cloister. So in Paris we pass swiftly beneath a portal and the roar ceases. The modern streets, to which our tourists confine their walks, form after all only a gigantic screen behind which much of old Paris still remains untouched.

'Here,' said my old friend to me but a few years ago, 'in this quiet street, the *Rue d'Argenteuil*, with the rickety *cour d'honneur*, the bit of greenery and the bust, is the house where Corneille lived and died; close by, in the *Rue St. Anne*, is the house where Bossuet died.' Both houses lay in streets between the *Rue St. Honoré* and the new *Avenue de l'Opera:* both have now disappeared. 'Come,' said he, 'into *St. Roch.* Here is the simple tomb of Corneille who lies beneath our feet; a medallion is all his monument; a little further on is an inscription to the memory of Bossuet.' And as we pass down the steps of the church, 'Here,' he says, 'was the famous battle between Bonaparte, the young soldier of the Convention, and the sections of Lepelletier, the counter Revolution of 1795.' It was Carlyle's famous 'whiff of grapeshot,' which he oddly enough supposed to have closed the Revolution. Carlyle declares that the traces of the balls are visible on the façade of the church: but they seem to have disappeared now.

'And now,' he would say, 'come and see the fruit in the *Marché St. Honoré.* On that spot opposite stood the Library of the Dominican order of monks called *Jacobins;* the Library was dedicated to the Dauphin, on the day of his birth, 1638. That Dauphin, the son of Louis XIII., born under the rule of Richelieu, was Louis XIV. At the Revolution the Library was hired by the political club called the "Friends of the Constitution." But these constitutional friends ended in friends of Robespierre and Marat; and thus the Library of the Dominican monks, dedicated in servile terms to Louis XIV. under the auspices of Richelieu, has given its name in all modern languages to sanguinary revolution.'

And now let us make our way, still keeping behind the screen of the new avenues, to the quaint old *Place des Victoires*, where the gilt statue in the centre, once dedicated *viro immortali* — to the 'grand monarque' — has undergone in the last hundred years as many changes as the successive governments of France, out of which the 'great king' has at last returned to his original place. And so we come to *St. Eustache*, that ænigma in the history of art, a Gothic Church built by Renascence artists in a wonderful medley of two different styles; and we pass in to look at the grand tomb of the great Colbert.

Thus we cross over to the vast *Halles Centrales*, and thence to the delightful *Marché aux Innocents*, with the fountain of Pierre Lescot and Jean Goujon — to my mind, at least in its original form, the most perfect work of the Renascence — now it is much transformed, but still in effect most lovely. For my part, I prefer the second of the three shapes which the fountain has received within the present century. In that old *Marché aux Innocents* I loved on a bright summer day to sit for hours, listening to the splash of the fountain and the gay voices of the children at play. It used to be a bit of old Paris: and worthy, with its colour, warmth, and varied perspective, to rank with a market-place in Verona or Genoa. Close by, in the small street *de la Ferronnerie*, then much narrower, Henry IV. was assassinated by Ravaillac; and on the spot where we stand was the grim burial-ground and charnel-house of the Church of the *Innocents*. Quite close by, across the new *Rue de Rivoli*, was the house of Coligny where he was murdered in the St. Bartholomew. In the *Rue St. Denis* is one of the houses in which Molière (Poquelin) was said to have been born. He certainly died in No. 34 *Rue de Richelieu*, opposite the fountain which bears his name.

Then we pass across to the old city, the original Lutetia, the Paris of Julius Cæsar, of Julian, of Clovis, and Hugh Capet. There on the quay beside the apse of Notre Dame we stop to mark the spot where stood the house of Canon Fulbert where Abailard knew, taught, and loved Héloïse, and then we wander on to what once was *Rue du Fouarre*, now almost swamped in the new *Rue Monge*, where stood the old school of Theology and Arts. Dante calls the street *vico degli strami ;* and he records Sigier, the famous doctor who taught there ; and some have supposed that he actually lodged in this spot. Another suggestion (which has high authority) is that from that spot he could watch the South Rose Window in the transept of Notre Dame, which suggested to him the idea of the Celestial Rose of Paradise. Thus my old friend and I are wont to saunter on talking of the schools of Paris, which for several centuries have played so vast a part in the history of France and of Europe, and which during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were the main intellectual centre of the West. And we look in at the *Sorbonne* to see the fine tomb of Richelieu in his church, which has the earliest dome ever built in Paris, or we stand for a moment before the well-known house on the *Quai Voltaire*, where the literary dictator of the eighteenth century died in the plenitude of his fame.

Thus we stroll on to the *Boulevard St. Germain*, and at the corner of the *Rue Bonaparte* we drop in at the old church of *St. Germain des Près*, to the historian one of the most memorable in Europe, for its foundation dates from thirteen centuries ago, and parts of what we see are far older than any church in London. There, with fragments of Merovingian building, we find the tomb of the greatest of modern philosophers — René Descartes. And as we come into the quarter of the *École de Médicine* (a little below the square of the *Odéon*, between it and the *Boulevard St. Michel*), 'here,' says my friend, 'is the "terre sainte de la Révolution,"' and he takes off his hat as a mark of respect, for he is a republican of the type of old Carnot, but in no sense a Jacobin. Then we come to the *Musée Dupuytren*, the surgical museum of Paris, formerly the refectory of the convent of the *Cordeliers* friars, of the Franciscan order, and in the revolution the *Cordelier* club of Danton and Camille Desmoulins. Strange that the garb designed in the thirteenth century by the blessed St. Francis to express humility and love — the rough belt of cord — should become in the eighteenth century the synonym of passionate terrorism. A little further off was the house where Danton lodged and thus his statue is now placed beside it. My friend knew the nephew of Danton, who remembered the great tribune. And close by, I have had pointed out to me the house where Charlotte Corday stabbed Marat in his bath. 'There,' said my friend once, 'in the terrible days of May, 1871, against that baker's shop, I saw as he lay dead in his gore the body of poor Jules — an excellent soul but a flighty—and for three days no one dared to touch or remove it.'

Somewhat higher up the hill, just above the Sorbonne, we came upon a dingy little inn in a back street. There is a Hôtel (then called St. Quentin) where J. J. Rousseau first stopped when he arrived in Paris, and there he first saw his wife, Thérèse Levasseur, who was a servant maid there; the story is told well in the *Rousseau* of Mr. John Morley. And we wander up the hill to the old *St. Etienne du Mont*, that strange *potpourri* of Renascence, Gothic, and classical bits; and there we search for the tombs of Racine and of Pascal, the body and monument of Racine having been removed from the old *Port Royal*, where he was originally laid, to be placed here beside Pascal.

Pascal lived and died close by this *St. Etienne du Mont*. I shall never forget the effect on my mind when one day sauntering up the hill from the Luxembourg garden to the observatory, I saw an old and dingy building of the seventeenth century, now a women's hospital. 'What is that?' I asked. 'That,' said my friend, 'is the *Port Royal* of Paris, a dépendance of the central *Port Royal des Champs*, and it was spared when the great seat of Jansenism was destroyed. What you see is the house where Sœur Angélique and the Arnauds removed for peace, which sheltered the Jansenists during twenty-five years of their most brilliant time. There Pascal met the Arnauds; there often came also Racine in his later years of theological mysticism.' It is the only surviving monument of that wonderful movement in France that we know as Jansenism.

That is the historic way of seeing Paris. But how many thousands of our tourists believe they know Paris as well as London, and have exhausted all its sights, and hurry through Paris, and yet they could not tell where the Convention had its hall, or how it came there, or where the bones of king and queen and the other victims of the guillotine were laid, and why they were thrown in that spot, or where the guillotine stood: nor have they seen the cells where Marie Antoinette and Danton, Vergniaud and the Girondins passed their last hours — or could distinguish the parts of the Louvre, or tell for whom the many L's and H's and M's are inscribed — or where our Henry v. lived when he was ruler of France after Azincourt, and where was the Palace of St. Louis, or of Philip Augustus, or Clovis, or the original *Lutetia* of the Parisii.

Let us try to group the record of Paris in historic epochs and in their right chronological order.

It is easy to realise the *Lutetia* of the Romans, the first Gaulish settlement. Loukhteith, its Celtic name, is said to mean 'the stronghold in the morass,' — not 'mud-city,' as Carlyle calls it, — nearly the same as Llyn-dyn, or London, which means the Lake-town. The island (or eyot as we say in the Thames), in the Seine a little below the junction of the Marne, where the Bièvre flows into the Seine, formed an excellent fastness. Cæsar has given a vivid account of the siege of Paris in 52 B.C., and from the top of the *Panthéon* we can stand and trace the campaign of Labienus, as told by the mighty general of Rome. The historic record of Paris thus begins 1946 years ago. It was a city of some, but not of great importance in the Roman Empire, its most famous incident being that it was the favourite residence of the Emperor Julian in the middle of the fourth century. In a well-known passage in his *Misopogon,* he speaks of his dear Lutetia, of its soft and delightful climate, and the richness of its vines.

There is something strangely suggestive in the association of Paris with the brilliant, philosophical, wrongheaded young Cæsar, with his paradoxical ideals, romantic adventures, and tragic end.

It is well known that the grand Roman remains called *Les Thermes,* adjoining the Cluny Museum, belonged to the palace of the Cæsars, the great hall forming the *frigidarium* of the Baths, and the rest of the foundations have been fairly made out. Other Roman remains are the altar found under Notre Dame, many altars and tombs, both Pagan and Christian, a large collection of objects in the

Carnavalet Museum, some remains of city walls of the fourth century, the famous inscription of the *nautae* or watermen's gild of Paris, two aqueducts, that of *Arcueil* on the south near Bicêtre, and that of *Chaillot* near the *Palais Royal*, an amphitheatre, east of the *Panthéon* near the *R. Monge*, a second palace beneath the *Conciergerie*, several cemeteries and tombs, in the *R. Vivienne* on the north, and also in the south, a Roman camp, a factory of pottery, a mass of antiquities at *Montmartre*, the *Mons Martis*, I think, not the *Mons Martyrum*.

This forms a mass of Roman antiquities which together raise Paris to the rank of importance amongst the scanty remnants of ancient civilisation in Northern Europe. In the *Thermes* we have the Roman *Louvre*, in the altar of Jupiter the antitype of *Notre Dame*, in the cemetery of the *R. Vivienne* the Roman *Père-la-Chaise*, in the foundations below the *Palais de Justice*, the Roman *Hôtel de Ville*, in the *Parvis de Notre Dame* perhaps the Roman Forum, the predecessor of the *Place de Grève*.

There is seldom to be met so striking a bit of city topography as the long history of evolution in the *Cité*, or island, of Paris. First, it was a group of palisaded eyots in a broad river spreading out on both sides into swamps — the river stronghold of a tribe called by the Romans Parisii, a word possibly connected with *Bar*, which is thought to signify a frontier (Bar-sur-Aube, etc.). Then this river stronghold is joined to the mainland by two bridges not in a straight line but at opposite ends of the island and both doubtless defended ; it is next a Roman city, ultimately walled, with its central temple, its municipality, its quays, and some outlying buildings, the Imperial Palace, the amphitheatre, cemeteries, camp, and the like, on the mainland, both north and south : one bridge, now the *Pont au change*, opening into the *Place du Châ-*

telet ; the smaller bridge, now *Petit Pont*, higher up the river over the narrow arm, at the end of the *R. St. Jacques.*

This Roman city, mainly on the island, but with annexes, north and south, on the mainland, according to the legend of St. Geneviève, repels the assault of Attila, is captured by Clovis at the end of the fifth century, and is made his capital. During the early monarchy, the island was the city, the home of the kings, the seat of the church, of government, and of justice, crowded with narrow streets and churches, and densely populated. Gradually as the walls of Paris were extended in a series of circuits from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, the island city was eased of its close population, and at last in our own day was cleared altogether by gigantic sweeps of destruction and reconstruction. It once contained some 50,000 inhabitants, at least fifty or sixty streets, and more than twenty churches. To-day it has few private houses left, except at each end. As we said, the *Cité* consists of Cathedral, *Palais de Justice*, and *Sainte Chapelle*, *Conciergerie* and Prisons, Prefecture of Police, Chamber of Commerce, a huge hospital, a huge barrack, a flower market — vast 'places,' gardens, quays, and *Morgue.* This is almost all that stands on the Paris of Julian, Clovis, and Hugh Capet.

It is a task full of historical teaching to trace the successive circuits and the walls of the city as it gradually grew. Each circuit represents an epoch in the history of France. First comes the old Roman and Gallo-Roman circuit — the *Cité* or island with some fortified post at the head of the North Bridge (Pl. du Châtelet) and at the South Bridge (R. St. Jacques) extending on the South mainland as far as the *Thermes* with villas, theatres, cemeteries, and establishments outside the city circuit. The second circuit is that of Louis the Stout, the great restorer of the monarchy (1130), who built the *Grand Châtelet* on the site of the *Place du Châtelet*, and the *Petit Châtelet* on the *Quai St. Michel* (left bank). The third circuit is that of the great king Philip Augustus (1200), who built the Louvre, completed Notre Dame, and carried the walls North as far as St. Eustache, South as far as the Pantheon, and included the smaller island, so that the original *Cité* was now but a sixth of the city. Next comes the fourth circuit, raised by Etienne Marcel in the middle of the fourteenth century, just after Poitiers during the great English War, who is duly commemorated by the fine equestrian statue beside the Hôtel du Ville. Marcel laid the foundations of the Bastille, and repaired and strengthened rather than extended the circuit of Philip Augustus; and then the whole work was completed by Charles v. in the second half of the fourteenth century. The fifth great circuit is that of Richelieu under Louis XIII. who carried the city walls Northwards as far as the existing inner Boulevards, and the R. Richelieu and its quarter is one of its additions; and Southwards it inclosed the whole district of the *Luxembourg* and its gardens to the *Jardin des Plantes*. The sixth great change came in the reign of Louis XIV. who conceiving himself invincible in France, if not in Europe, found fortifications in Paris needless and barbarous. Accordingly in his reign the old walls of Henry IV. and Richelieu were razed, and the Boulevards that we know were constructed as spacious avenues. On the site of the ancient *Tour de Nesle*, the Institute and the College *Mazarin* were built; the *Louvre* was completed and transformed into an Italian palace; the *Tuileries* were continued until they joined the Louvre; the *Invalides* and other great works were continued, and finally Paris received its character of an open modern city of Palladian architecture. The seventh great change was in the reign of Louis XVI. just before the Revolution, when for purely fiscal purposes the octroi barrier was carried forward to inclose vast districts not before within the walls. This was adopted by the Revolution and completed by Napoleon. The eighth and final circuit was that of L. Philippe in 1840, the fortifications which held the German army at bay for four months — which it is now proposed to destroy for a military circuit even more vast. The story of the successive circuits of Paris is the history of France in its critical epochs.

After the political and military history of the city comes the history of its religious foundations, the Churches, Abbeys, and confraternities. No one can suppose, till he has gone into it, the enormous number of these, their strange antiquity, their rich and stirring history. The fragments of these abbeys and churches that we see to-day are the scanty remnants of vast edifices and a dense population scattered and gone — just as a column or an arch at Rome survives to tell us of the mighty city of the Cæsars with its millions. The Revolution, the Nineteenth Century, the Napoleons, Haussmann, and the Municipal Council have swept away the old churches and convents of Paris by hundreds and thousands. The immense clearances in the Island *Cité*, those between and around the Louvre and the Tuileries, the new Boulevards and broad Avenues, have destroyed scores and scores. The new *Hôtel Dieu* and the '*places*' in front of and round Notre Dame, the Barrack of the Guard and the Tribunal de Commerce and Prefecture of Police have between them demolished more than twenty entire streets and at least twenty churches, chapels, oratories, and religious edifices. The names of churches and foundations destroyed survive in the countless St. Jacques and St. Pierres, the Capucins, Jacobins, Mathurins, and so forth, that we find in the streets and passages. All those who are seriously interested in the ecclesiastical antiquities of old Paris should study the very excellent guide just published — *The Churches of Paris, from Clovis to Charles X.*, by S. Sophia Beale, with illustrations by the author (London, 1893). It collects, in a useful and interesting manner, a mass of information as to the old churches of Paris.

We forget, in their new casing, the antiquity of those which remain. The Madeleine which we stare at as a bran-new Greek Temple is as old as the thirteenth century in foundation. It is contemporary with St. Louis, and was in origin the chapel of the country palace of the Archbishop of Paris — exactly answering to Lambeth Palace. So too the *Panthéon* — which Englishmen are too wont to look on as an imitation of St. Paul's, and a mere piece of eighteenth century classicism — is one of the oldest and most interesting monuments in Christendom. The church of Saint Geneviève, the patron saint of Paris, who is said to have roused the citizens to resist Attila the Hun, was founded to contain her tomb in 508 by Clovis and Clotilda the first Christian King and Queen of the Franks. Clovis and Clotilda and many of their race were there buried, beside the Jeanne d'Arc of the fifth century. A vast abbey rose there; its name was frequently changed. The tombs and the relics were transferred at times to St. Etienne du Mont, with which it is closely associated. The name, the exact spot, the building, have been constantly altered. The church that we see, which is little more than a hundred years old, has been three times a church, and three times converted into a secular monument which it is to-day. It is the older Westminster Abbey of Paris, for it goes back to times before Arthur, and to a century before the coming of the monks amongst the Saxons. The church which fourteen centuries ago was dedicated to the first champions of Northern Christianity, has been the burying-place of Mirabeau, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Marat, and has now again been made a secular monument in order to hold the ashes of Victor Hugo.

'St. Germain' means to an English ear aristocratic, magnificent, exclusive. But historically, St. Germain is the abbey founded by Childebert, the son of Clovis in 542, half a century before Augustine came to Canterbury. Its church was the burying-place of many kings of the first dynasty. The church that we see in the *Boulevard St. Germain* is of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; but it is said to contain some fragments of carving, capitals, and columns in the apse from the church of Childebert. The ancient, but probably not the original, tombs of the Merwings have been removed to St. Denis and to the Museums. Hugh Capet, the founder of the third dynasty, was Abbot of St. Germain. It was one of the greatest foundations in Christendom. We may read in the *Histoire Générale* a full account of it, with many illustrations at different times. It was one of the greatest centres of Benedictine learning. Mabillon, Monfaucon laboured there. They lie in the church with Descartes and Boileau.

The *Abbaye*, the prison of the Revolution, was part of the monastery, and was only removed in the third empire in my own memory. The famous *Pré aux clercs*, renowned in romance and memoir, in the drama and in art, where the gallants of the Renascence fought their duels, was the riverside meadow of the learned monks. What a world it is! Here is a church, the Westminster Abbey of the first Frank kings at a date when the Britons were fighting the heathen Saxons inch by inch — the home for twelve centuries of a mighty order and the central seat of their learning — the abbey of the mitred sovereign who gave his name to the dynasty of France, the home of modern French learning, — the scene of the duels of Henri II. and the massacres of September — now a poor maimed and restored fragment of Romanesque architecture, drowned in the torrential magnificence of a Napoleonic Boulevard, and giving its ancient name to the luxurious retreat of impotent bigotry.

St. Denis is the true Westminster Abbey of Paris, the burying-place of so many kings since Dagobert. It commemorates Dionysius, a Christian martyr of the third century in the Decian persecution, called the first bishop of Paris. Dagobert, in the seventh century, built here a great basilica ; but in the twelfth century Suger made it one of the great cradles of pointed architecture. If we could see St. Denis as it existed down to the Revolution with all its tombs, its monuments, and its treasures intact, our own Abbey could hardly compare with it in historical interest. Accustomed to the hallowed gloom of our own Abbey, we shudder at the new, scraped, gilt revivalism of St. Denis to-day. But though its treasures are scattered, and the bones torn from its desecrated graves, and the old glass is destroyed with the tombs, statues, carvings, and wood work, though the Viollet-le-Ducs have had their will upon the old church — yet the historical mind must recognise, when it has recovered its temper, that the church of the great Abbot Suger still presents to us a type with which few buildings of the Middle Ages can vie in historical memories.

He who will follow up the histories of these Abbeys, — of *Ste. Geneviève*, of *St. Germain*, *St. Denis*, *St. Victor*, the foundation of William of Champeaux, of the other *St. Germain*, opposite the *Louvre*, and *St. Jacques de la Boucherie* — who will study the history of the schools of Paris, so famous from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries and the growth of the University, incorporated by St. Louis in the thirteenth century — will come to see how completely, during the Middle Ages, Paris was the intellectual centre of Catholicism, if Rome was its centre of government. And he who will watch all that goes on to-day in the quarter between *Notre Dame* and the *Invalides* will understand how deep are the roots of this organised Catholicism still — in spite of Voltaire, Rousseau, Revolution, and Commune.

We may still see in Paris three typical masterpieces of Gothic art, each one recording a great chief in a central epoch. The first is the *Abbey of St. Denis*, built in 1140 by Suger, the friend and fellow-worker of St. Bernard, the great minister of Louis the Stout. The next is the Cathedral of *Notre Dame*, practically completed about sixty years later in the reign of Philip Augustus. The third is the *Sainte Chapelle*, built in 1245 by his grandson, Saint Louis. Within the space of this one hundred years, from 1140 to 1245, the pointed style in France arose, flourished, and reached perfection. These three buildings are associated with the three great kings of French Feudalism. St. Denis is perhaps the earliest complete example of the pointed style : it is earlier than our Salisbury by a hundred years. As the Westminster Abbey of France, as the type of the first pointed style in its central home, St. Denis must be reckoned, at least by the historian, as the cradle of pointed architecture, even more truly than the dome of St. Peter's at Rome is the cradle of the domed architecture of the Renascence.

Notre Dame, to the historian if not to the artist, is the typical, central, Gothic Cathedral. It is almost, if not absolutely, the earliest of the great pointed Cathedrals in their maturity. Its noble façade is altogether the grandest, most majestic, most permanently satisfying of all the great creations of the pointed style — at least if, in the mind's eye, we conceive it with all its carving and statues perfect in their original form, and perhaps with its towers carried some hundred feet higher by spires in some such way as Viollet-le-Duc conceived. If there be pointed Cathedrals which surpass *Notre Dame* in mass, richness, and beauty, and there can be but three others, the historical importance of *Notre Dame* stands pre-eminent, as the work of the French monarchy at its highest point, as the cathedral of their capital, the intellectual centre of Catholicism in the thirteenth century — the high water-mark of Western Christendom. He who would understand the Middle Ages should make a minute study of one of these mighty works, with the admirable monographs of the French archæologists. *Notre Dame*, with its triple portals, and the gallery of the kings, its carvings and statues, the exquisite screen within round the choir, its majestic façade and noble towers, had no superior in Gothic Art, whilst it failed least in stability and simplicity, the one side where Gothic art is usually prone to err. It is a happiness to be able to remember Notre Dame before the restoration began : when it was surrounded by a labyrinth of picturesque streets and buildings, and the grey façade rose up in proud pathos from out the gables in crumbling and battered decay.

The Cathedral has never before been seen as we see it to-day : for it now stands alone in vast open spaces, detached from the houses, churches, chapels, and palaces which were piled up round it. To-day it looks too much like a huge model, or disinterred ruin, set in an open-air museum. It is no longer the central cathedral of Catholic France: it is a sight, a relic, a national monument, an ecclesiastical *Palais des Thermes:* from the restored fragments of which the city, and all that can recall its builders has been unsparingly swept into oblivion.

Thirdly, the *Sainte Chapelle*, the work of St. Louis, in the middle of the thirteenth century, is accepted as the type of pointed art in its zenith. It may be called the only quite perfect work of Gothic art, mainly because its small scale necessarily frees it from the besetting weaknesses of Gothic art when it essays the grandest problems of the builders' science. Nor need the historian of art regret the restoration so fiercely as does the artist. When Viollet-le-Duc took it in hand, it was a mutilated ruin, out of which the ordinary visitor could not reconstruct its original glow. The paint may be overdone; the colours are not always harmonious; the new glass is not equal to the old. But its restoration by the most learned of modern antiquarians enables the unlearned to judge the effect of Gothic architecture in its glory, and to understand the pregnant remark of Mr. Fergusson that Gothic architecture might well be named the painted-glass style of building. To the historian, this Chapel, the domestic oratory of St. Louis, the purest hero of the Middle Ages, the church of the palace of the French kings in their noblest era, the entrancing masterpiece of pointed architecture, must remain as one of the typical buildings in the world.

The mass of buildings, of which the *Sainte Chapelle* is part, exactly answers to our palace of Westminster; and our palace alone can compare with it as a relic of the Feudal monarchy. The *Conciergerie* prison, the adjacent hall, and the towers which we see along the *Quai de l'Horloge*, correspond with the remains of the old palace of Westminster, which was finally destroyed when the Houses of Parliament were built. The *Sainte Chapelle* answers to St. Stephen's, of which the exquisite crypt alone survived the fire of 1834. Westminster Hall answers to the *Salle des Pas Perdus*, which took the place of the great Hall of St. Louis. The *Palais de Justice* answers to the Law Courts of Westminster which were in use till removed in 1882. The *Tour de l' Horloge* exactly repeats our Clock Tower. Now the French palace is in foundation far more ancient than the English; more of its ancient parts remain; and its historical record is longer, and almost more crowded with incident, than our own. The French palace is the successor of the Municipal palace of Roman *Lutetia;* and traces of this building have been preserved. It was certainly the Parisian palace of Clovis and his dynasty, of Charlemagne and his dynasty, and it was the capital seat of the Counts of Paris, when they became kings of France. It only ceased to be a royal residence in the age of Francis I. and Henri II. It was thus for a thousand years the home of the monarchs of the Seine valley. It is significant of French history that, whereas in England Parliament has finally ousted both Monarchy and Justice from the Palace of Westminster and installed itself in the royal abode and even taken its name, in Paris it is Justice and Police which have appropriated the Palace in the island *Cité* and have long ago ousted both Parliament and Monarchy.

In England we have nothing of the old palace left but the crypt of St. Stephen's, some cloisters, a few chambers, and the great Hall. In France they have rebuilt their old Hall; but they have their Chapel almost entire. And whereas in Westminster we have the old palace now rebuilt, and absorbed in Barry's modern perpendicular, in Paris they have still the shell of the old towers and gateway, and some fine work of the age of St. Louis within the *Conciergerie* building. There is some noble masonry in what is called the Kitchen of St. Louis, evidently the substructure of his palace, and many other parts of his work within the precincts of the prison. Few prisons have a record more stirring. Here, during the Revolution, all the chief prisoners passed their last hours. We may still see the cell where Marie Antoinette uttered her last prayers, where Robespierre lay in agony, and Danton and Vergniaud thundered out their latest perorations, — and they show you, too, the traditional scene of the mythical last supper of the Girondins, which figures so melodramatically in the famous romance of Lamartine.

This *Conciergerie*, with the hall of the Cordelier Club, the *Musée Dupuytren*, is the only extant building in Paris, which is closely associated with great scenes of the Revolution. The *Bastille* is gone, the *Tuileries*, the *Hôtel de Ville*, the Hall of the Convention in the *R. de Rivoli*, the Jacobin Club, the prisons, the *Temple*, *Abbaye*, *La Force*, *Châtelet*, and the rest. So, too, the tombs of Mirabeau, Voltaire, Rousseau, Marat, Louis XVI., and Marie Antoinette no longer hold their bones, and cenotaphs record the spot where they were laid. *Etiam periere sepulchra.* New Haussmannic streets cover the soil, wherein the ashes of Danton and Vergniaud, Charlotte Corday and Madame Roland, moulder unknown. Of the Revolution no buildings remain but only sites; and the only edifices, which survive to speak to us of the September massacres and the Terror, are the dining-hall of the followers of St. Francis and the palace of St. Louis, the knight and crusader.

In spite of destruction and reconstruction, the history of the great edifices of old Paris is wonderfully instructive, even that of the buildings which have wholly disappeared. But they must be studied in the learned and elaborate works, such as those of Dulaure, Piganiol, Viollet-le-Duc, Lacroix, Lenoir, Guilhermy, Fournier, Hoffbauer, Fergusson, Hamerton, in the *Histoire Générale*, and in *Paris á travers les Ages*, in the splendid series of etchings and engravings of old Paris, which may be found in the library of the *Carnavalet* Museum, and in our British Museum. *Bastille*, *Louvre*, *Hôtel de Ville*, *Tuileries*, *Luxembourg*, the *Cité*, *St. Germain*, *Ste. Geneviève*, would each require an essay, or a volume with maps and plans and restorations, to make them intelligible. But those who seek to know what Paris has been in the long succession of ages may still revive it in their minds, with the aid of the mass of literature that is open to them, and if they will study not only the extant churches, but such works of domestic art as the *Hôtel Cluny*, and *Hôtel de Sens*, *Hôtel la Valette*, the house in the *Cours la Reine*, and the *Hôtel Carnavalet.*

A careful study of Silvestre, Ducerceau, and Méryon will give some idea of old Paris, with its vast walls, gates, towers, castles, its crowded churches, its immense abbeys, its narrow winding streets, its fetid cemeteries, gloomy courts and *impasses*, its filthy lanes, and its bridges loaded with houses. We may linger about the old remnants of churches, the flotsam and jetsam of the Mediæval Catholicism, such bits as the tower of *St. Jacques*, and the portals of the two *St. Germains* and of *St. Nicolas des Champs*, the old churches of *St. Julien le Pauvre*, and *St. Martin des Champs*, the church of *St. Séverin*, and the chapel of the *Château de Vincennes*. Then let us study the tombs in *St. Germain des Près*, of *St. Denis*, *St. Etienne du Mont:* and then we may go on to the tomb that all Englishmen visit — the tomb which I always feel to be the grandest of all sepulchral conceptions (to be set beside the tomb of Theodoric at Ravenna, and the tomb of Cecilia Metella on the Appian way), almost the one work of modern art, which is at once colossal, noble, and pathetic — I mean the mighty vault beneath the dome of the *Invalides*, where the greatest soldier and the worst ruler of our age sleeps at last in peace, guarded by the veterans of France.

We need not deny to modern Paris the gift of charm; we may admit that her museums and libraries, her collections, and her treasures are inexhaustible to the fit student; but far more impressive is the history of this memorable city, with its vast range of time, of variety, of association — with its record of the dawn of Western civilisation, of Catholicism and Feudalism, of the Renascence, and the modern world, of the Revolution of the last century, and the Imperialism of this century — with its dust enriched with the bones of those who in things of the soul and in things of war, in the love of beauty, and in the passion for new life, have dared and done memorable deeds, from the days of Geneviève and Clotilda, the Louis and the Henrys, down to the two Napoleons, and the three Republics.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF PARIS.[1]

No city of the Old World has undergone changes so enormous within the last hundred years as the city of Paris. To contrast its condition down to the year 1789 with its condition to-day is to measure the civilisation of old Europe by the civilisation of the Europe we see. Paris in 1789 was a perfect type of the feudal, monarchic, obsolete system of privilege; the Paris of 1889 is the most republican, the most modern, the most symmetrical and complete of the cities of Europe. The hundred years have witnessed there a reorganisation of social life more rapid and profound than any other which Europe has known.

If the millions who throng the boulevards, and the *Places*, the *Champ de Mars*, and the *Esplanade* of the *Invalides* could but roll back the veil of time, could see that city as it stood in the closing years of the eighteenth century, they would behold a city which in all essential things was a fortress of the Middle Ages, adorned with some vast palaces and churches of the *Grand Monarque* — a city, in the main, such as Rome was until the Italian kingdom had entered and transformed it. They would see the life of the seventeenth century, in most material points, unaltered — nay, traces of the life of the sixteenth, the fifteenth, and even of the fourteenth century.

The vast, gloomy, and decayed remains of the old city still cumbered the lines of so many gay and open boulevards. Where there are now some twenty bridges across the Seine, there were then but six or seven; and on some of these could still be seen the houses and buildings which made the bridges of old Europe crowded alleys. There were few open spaces at all except in front of the *Hôtel de Ville* and at the end of the garden of the *Tuileries*. The old city of Richelieu and Mazarin — the city (to speak roughly) that lay between the *Panthéon* and the gate of *St. Denis*, and between the *Tuileries* and the *Bastille* — existed still, and much in the condition in which Richelieu and Mazarin had known it, — crowded with narrow, crooked, picturesque streets, unpaved, uncleaned, ill-lighted, with Gothic portals and towers here and there; crowded round with houses, halls, and mansions. The island, or old *Cité*, in particular, was a dense tangle of streets, churches, and religious edifices. From north to south there ran several ancient and a few recent thoroughfares; but from east to west he who wished to pass from the *Bastille* to the *Louvre* would make his way through a network of tortuous lanes, where the direct route was continually interrupted by huge palaces, mediæval fortresses, or conventual enclosures.

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[1] *The North American Review*, Sept. 1889, vol. 149.

Four great castles of feudal times still frowned over the city and bore the banner of the Old Monarchy — the *Châtelet*, the *Bastille*, the *Temple*, and the *Conciergerie*. Of these not a vestige remains except the restored simulacrum of the last. In the midst of this jumble of close and mediæval streets there were scattered many sumptuous Palladian palaces of royal, princely, or ducal founders, with fore-courts, colonnades, terraces, and enclosed gardens, stretching over acres, and dominating entire quarters in defiant, lavish, insolent pride. Here and there still towered above the modern streets a huge remnant of some castle of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, such as we may see to this day in Florence, Verona, or Rome.

And, besides these castles and palaces, the closely-packed streets were even more thickly strewn with churches, convents, and abbeys. *Notre Dame*, *St. Eustache*, *St. Germain*, *l'Auxerrois*, the *Hôtel de Ville*, the *Louvre*, the *Palais Royal*, and the *Palais de Justice* were hemmed in with a labyrinth of old and entangled streets. Buildings, alleys, and even churches separated the *Louvre* from the *Tuileries*, *Notre Dame* from the *Palais de Justice*, cut off *Notre Dame* and the *Hôtel de Ville* from the river, stood between *Palais Royal* and *Louvre*, and between the *Panthéon* and the garden of the *Luxembourg*. Where the graceful fountain of Victory now brightens one of the gayest spots in Paris, *Place du Châtelet*, bordered with two immense theatres, colonnades, gardens, and trees, there were then the decayed remnant of the great royal fortress and a network of crooked and unsightly lanes.

Besides the churches, chapels, hospitals, palaces, and castles, there also stood within the circuit of the city more than two hundred religious houses for both sexes; abbeys, convents, nunneries, and fraternities; peopled with thousands of men and women, leading separate lives, under different vows, owning obedience to far-distant superiors, and possessing various immunities. The vast areas occupied by the abbeys of *St. Germain*, of *St. Martin*, of *St. Victor*, by the houses of the *Bernardins*, and the *Célestins*, and the *Quinze-Vingts*, were a sensible portion of the whole area within the walls. From the then new *Place Louis XV.* to the *Bastille*, from the *Luxembourg* garden to the *Port St. Denis*, Paris was a great fortified city of the Middle Ages, crammed with thousands of sacred buildings, Catholic and feudal institutions, and thickly studded with Italian palaces, colleges, hospitals, and offices in the proud and lavish style of Louis XIV. Poverty, squalor, uncleanness, and vice jostled the magnificence of Princes and the mouldering creations of the ages of Faith.

The difference between the Paris of 1789 and the Paris of 1889 is enormous; but it is very far from true that the whole difference is gain. Much has been gained in convenience, health, brilliance: much has been lost in beauty, variety, and historical tradition. To the uncultured votary of amusement the whole of the change represents progress: to the artist, the antiquarian, and the sentimentalist it represents havoc, waste, and bad taste. It would be well if the tens of thousands who delight in the boulevards, gardens, and sunny bridges of to-day would now and then cast a thought upon the priceless works of art, the historical remains, and the picturesque charm which the new Paris has swept away. Churches and towers, encrusted sculptures of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, rare, inimitable, irrecoverable wonders of skill and feeling, have been swallowed up wholesale in the modern 'improvements.' Sixteen churches have disappeared from the *Cité* alone: four of them and ten streets have been carted away to make the site of a single hospital. Where is the abbey of *St. Victor*, of *St. Germain*, of *Ste. Geneviève*, and the *Cour des Comptes*, and the churches of *St. André*, *St. Jacques de la Boucherie*, *Saints Innocents*, *St. Jean*, and *St. Paul?* Where are the turrets of Saint Louis, and Etienne Marcel, and Philip the Fair? Where are the quaint passages and fantastic gables preserved for us only by Silvestre, Pérelle, Méryon, Gavarni, Martial, and Gustave Doré?

It would be idle to regret the inevitable — more especially when the inevitable means the rebuilding and laying-out of the most brilliant, most spacious, most symmetrical of modern cities. For us it is enough that, down to the Revolution of 1789, Paris was an intensely old-world city; and that to-day it is the type of the modern city. In the eighteenth century London had lost every trace of the fortress, of the feudal city, of subservience to king, aristocracy, or church. It had neither ramparts, nor traces of rampart, nor convents, nor proud palaces, nor royal castles in its midst. The Reformation had swept away the monasteries, the aristocracy were more than half *bourgeois* (at least whilst they lived in London), and the King was a popular country squire, who, in things essential, was governed by a Liberal Parliament. The Tower was a popular show; the Mayor and Corporation were a powerful, free, and public-spirited body; the capital was being extended and beautified in the interest of those who lived in it; and, in all its main lines, the city of London was much what it is to-day. It was about one-third more populous than Paris, better paved, better lit, with a better supply of water and means of communication, and with a far superior system of administration. It was practically a modern city, even then: it was the current type of the modern city, and was regarded by all as a far more agreeable, more civilised, more splendid city than Paris. It was natural enough that, when the liberal nobles and wits of France began to visit England (as in the eighteenth century they universally did), an Anglo-mania resulted — which was one of the main causes of the Revolution.

Some of the great ornaments of Paris existed complete in 1789, but they were encumbered with narrow streets and cut off from each other. The *Louvre*, the *Tuileries*, the *Palais Royal* existed much as we have seen them, but they were all divided from each other by blocks of buildings and intricate lanes. The *Palais de Justice*, the remains of the palace of St. Louis, and *Notre Dame* were there, but were blocked up by modern buildings. Portions of the *Luxembourg* and of the *Hôtel de Ville* were standing. The *Invalides*, the *École Militaire*, stood as we know them; the *Place de la Concorde* (then *Place de Louis XV.*) was already laid out, and the two great offices flanking the *Rue Royale* were already built.

On the other hand, the bridge now called *de la Concorde* was not open, nor did it abut on the Hall of the *Corps Législatif;* there was no *Arc de l'Étoile*, no *Madeleine*, no Column of *Vendôme*, no *Place de l'Opéra*, *du Châtelet*, or *de la Bastille.* The *Place du Carrousel* was blocked by buildings, and the *Rue de Rivoli*, the *Rue de la Paix*, did not exist. The *Panthéon* was not quite finished; the *Louvre* was not continued on the northern side; the site of the *Halles* was a network of streets; cemeteries and charnel-houses existed within the city; the quays were irregular and rude structures; the bridges were picturesque edifices of four or five different centuries, and only one-third of their present number; there were no pavements for foot-passengers, no cleansing of the streets, whilst open sewers met one at every turn. Paris in 1789 was much what Rome was in 1860 — a huge, ancient, fortified city, filled with dense, squalid, populous districts, interspersed with vast open tracts in the hands of powerful nobles or great monasteries, and the whole perpetually dominated by a bigoted, selfish, and indifferent absolutism.

The population of Paris in 1789, according to the latest and best authorities, was about 640,000: in 1889 it is 2,240,000. It has thus increased exactly three and one-half times. There is nothing abnormal in this. London in the same time has grown quite fourfold, and a similar rate of increase has been seen in Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Lyons, Marseilles, and Rouen. The increase of many English centres of industry, and of nearly all the American, has been vastly greater and more rapid. Still, the increase of Paris, within a hundred years, of three or four times in population and five or six times in area, is a sufficiently striking fact. In 1789 there were about one thousand streets: there are now about four thousand. There were fifteen boulevards: there are now more than one hundred. The *Invalides*, the *Luxembourg*, the *Bastille*, the line of the inner boulevards, and the *Place Vendôme* then marked the utmost limits of regular habitations; and thence the open country began. There were within the barriers immense spaces, gardens, and parks; but they were closed to the public. Paris which is now covered with gardens, parks, plantations, and open spaces was in 1789 singularly bare of any. The *Jardin des Plantes*, the *Jardin des Tuileries*, were royal possessions; the *Champs Elysées* and the *Palais Royal* were favourite walks. But these were almost the only accessible promenades. Of some forty *places* of importance which Paris now possesses, few existed in 1789, except the *Place de la Concorde*, the *Esplanade* of the *Invalides*, the *Champ de Mars*, the *Place Vendôme*, and the *Place Royale* (now *des Vosges*). Within the circuit of the older city there was hardly a clear space, a plantation, a parterre, or a free walk, except in the *Parvis de Notre Dame*, the *Marché des Innocents*, and the *Place de la Grève*. From the *Louvre* to the *Hôtel de Ville* there lay a labyrinth of dark and tortuous lanes, such as we may still see in the *Ghetto* of Rome or round about the Canongate at Edinburgh.

The change that has taken place is that of a dream, or a transformation in a theatre. The Revolution came, the Convention, the first Empire, the Orleans monarchy, and the third Empire — and all is new. Streets only too symmetrical, straight, and long; open spaces at the junction of all the principal streets, boulevards, avenues, gardens, fountains, have sprung by magic into the places so lately covered with labyrinthine alleys. As we stand today in the *Place du Carrousel*, in the *Place de l'Opéra, du Théâtre Français, du Châtelet, de la Bastille, des Innocents, St. Michel, St. Germain, Notre Dame*, or *de l'Hôtel de Ville*, each radiant with imposing buildings, stately avenues, monuments, fountains, columns, and colonnades, with everything that modern architecture can devise of spacious, airy, and gay, it is hard indeed to understand how in so few years (and much of it within the memory of men still living) all this has been created over the ruins of the dense, dark, intricate streets of the last century, where lanes still followed the ramparts of Louis the Stout and Philip Augustus, where the remnants existed of *châteaux* built by mediæval seigneurs, or during the civil wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The clearance has been most cruel of all in the old *Cité*, the original Paris of the earliest ages. Down to the Revolution it had a population of about 20,000, which has now almost wholly disappeared, along with the sixteen churches, the oratories, and streets. The ancient island — *Lutetia* — is now occupied almost solely by six enormous public buildings; and the spot, which for eighteen centuries has been busy with the hum of a city life of intense activity and movement, is now covered only by a lonely but glorious cathedral, an enormous hospital, a huge barrack, courts, offices, and official buildings. The oldest bit of Paris, the oldest bit of city in all Northern Europe, now looks for the most part like a new quarter laid out on some vacant space. *Notre Dame*, the *Sainte Chapelle*, the *Conciergerie*, have been restored and furbished up till they almost might pass for modern buildings. The barrack, the hospital, the geometric streets, the open square, might do credit to Chicago. It is all very fine, imposing, spacious, and new. But a groan may be forgiven to those who can remember the mystic portals of *Notre Dame* with the gallery of the kings, surrounded with houses which seemed to lean upon the mother-church for comfort and support, before the restorer had worked his will upon the crumbling, dark, pathetic fragments of carving, whilst the noblest façade ever raised by northern Gothic builders still looked like a great mediæval church, and not like an *objet d'art* to be gazed at in a museum.

This transformation, the most astounding that Europe can show, fills us ever anew with a profound sense of the power which for a century has animated the municipal government of Paris; of the energy, wealth, industrial skill, artistic imagination, and scientific accomplishments which have gone to the making of it. To plough miles and miles of broad new boulevards through the most crowded lines of an ancient, populous, and busy city; to transform a network of *Ghettos* into a splendid series of avenues, squares, and gardens; to eviscerate the heart of a great capital, and to create symmetry, sunniness, convenience, gaiety, and variety out of inveterate confusion, gloom, discomfort, and squalor — this impresses the mind with the visible signs of imperial might in the ruler, and inexhaustible versatility and adaptability in the governed.

It is a different thing when a Frederick plans a new city in Berlin, or when a Republic creates itself a capital in Washington. But in Paris the capital existed; with eighteen centuries of history, with monarchic, feudal, ecclesiastical, municipal institutions by the thousand, rooted for ages in the soil, and buttressed bv long epochs of prescription, privilege, law, and superstition. Not for an hour has the capital ceased to be the living heart of France; not for a day has its own activity been interrupted, or the lives of some million or so of citizens been broken. Republic, Consulate, Empire, Monarchy, have succeeded each other in turn. Revolutions, sieges, massacres, anarchy, tyranny, parliaments, dictators, and communes have in turn had their seat in Paris, and have occupied her streets, buildings, and monuments. But under all, the transformation of old Paris into new Paris has gone on. *Bastille*, *Châtelet*, *Temple*, *Tuileries*, have been swept away: enormous boulevards and avenues have torn their huge gaps like cannon-shot through ancient quarters: abbeys, churches, palaces, hospitals, convents, gardens, halls, and theatres have disappeared like unsubstantial visions, and have left not a rack behind. As the vacant spaces are cleared, new streets, theatres, halls, and squares spring up. A thousand new fancies and hundreds of new monuments take their place with inexhaustible invention. The city grows more populous, more rich, more brilliant year by year. The busy life which is silenced in the *Cité*, or by the new boulevards, avenues, and *places*, bursts forth with a louder din elsewhere. Every creation of artistic imagination, every invention of science, is instantly brought into service and adapted to modern life. And with all this whirl of change and action, Paris remains in its essence an ancient, and not a modern, city; a very ancient city to him who knows its history, and can recall the memorials of its past. To this day, such an one can retrace her successive circuits, her ramparts and barriers of successive dynasties; he can track out the spots made memorable by Julian, by Clovis, by Philip Augustus, by Francis I. and Henry IV., by Abailard, and Héloïse, and Jeanne d'Arc, by Dante, by Descartes, by Corneille. Some two hundred streets still bear the names of saints, each recalling some convent of the Merovingian, Carlovingian, or Capetian dynasty, some one of the thousands of churches, chapels, oratories, and religious houses which once filled Paris. To the historical mind, the *St. Germains*, the *St. Thomases*, the *St. Andrés*, the *St. Martins*, the *St. Victors*, the *St. Bernards*, which we read inscribed at the street corner, recall a series of local memorials which reach back for a thousand years. Here St. Louis stood and prayed ; here the Grand Master of the Templars was burned ; here Jeanne d'Arc fell desperately wounded ; here Molière died ; here Corneille lived ; here Coligny was murdered, here Henry IV. was stabbed ; here Voltaire died, and here Camille Desmoulins opened the Revolution.

Here, as everywhere in human life, we must take the evil with the good. It is idle, peevish, retrograde, to rail at the inevitable, or to cry out for the past. There has been awful, wanton, brutal destruction ; there have been corruption and plunder ; there has been vile art, making itself the pandar to folly and lust ; there have been cruel disregard of the poor and inhuman orgies of wealth and power, in all this series of transformation scenes which Paris has seen. No man can again recall to us the exquisite fancies carved on stone and on jewelled windows of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Perhaps it was better to cart them away than to furbish them anew with gewgaw restorations. But modern life in a vast city could not endure this plethora of obsolete churches and useless convents in its midst, and the friars, black, white, and grey, had to go with all their belongings. Dark alleys are delicious in etchings ; but they are the nests of disease, vice, and death. A city of two millions cannot breathe within the winding lanes which sufficed the burghers of the fourteenth century within their gloomy ramparts. Haussmann and his myrmidons may have amassed fortunes ; but the world is still searching, lantern in hand like Diogenes, for a wise, just, incorruptible municipal authority. The art which has created modern Paris is not high art, is not true art, is in many ways most meretricious art; and in its *chef d'œuvre*, the new Opera, it has reached the pinnacle of vulgar display. But, take it all and all, Paris can show us the brightest, most inventive, and least *mesquin* street architecture which the nineteenth century can achieve, and certainly the most imperial civic organisation which Europe can produce.

There is much to be said on all sides of this complex problem; the catholic, the legitimist, the republican, the antiquarian, the artist, the poet, the socialist, the economist, even the tourist, may be listened to with sympathy in turn. Let us gnash our teeth at the tale told us by the student of old art; let us drop a tear over the wail of the dispossessed orders; let us linger over every fragment of the past which the historian can point out as spared in the havoc; let us listen to the story of the dispossessed workman; let us study the statistics of the old and the new city; let us stroll with the *flâneur* on the boulevards; but let us not say that it is either altogether evil or altogether good. Modern Paris is the creation of the Revolution of 1789, and, like most of the creations of that mighty and pregnant epoch, it has the soul of good in things evil; deplorable waste and error in the midst of inevitable and indispensable reform.

A city is made to live in. Now, a serious defect in old Paris was that it was a city in which men died. Down to the Revolution of 1789, the annual deaths exceeded the annual births. Since the Revolution the births exceed the deaths. The birth-rate in Paris is low, and the death-rate is high, as compared with that of London and English towns to-day; but the birth-rate of Paris is now much in excess of the death-rate. The total deaths in modern Paris are but double the actual deaths in 1789, though the population is now nearly four times as great. The death-rate of old Paris was far higher than that of any actual city of Western Europe, and for a parallel to it we must now go to the cities of the East. The death-rate of Paris is still high, for it is largely increased by the almost deliberate destruction of infant life. But before the Revolution, we must take it that some three or four thousand lives were annually sacrificed to insanitary conditions. The sanitary condition of Paris in the middle of the last century was, indeed, that of Cairo or Constantinople. Drinking-water taken direct from the Seine, open sewers, cemeteries, and charnel-houses in the heart of the city, infected and squalid lanes, dirt, decay, and disorder made life precarious, and scattered disease wholesale. The marvel is that pestilence was ever absent.

This was no accident; nor was it due to apathy or ignorance in the people of Paris. It was a direct result of the *Old Régime* — the deliberate act of the Monarchy, the Church, and the Nobility. Its causes were political. Paris presented in herself an epitome of all the vices, follies, inhumanities, and solecisms of the Old System. Everything official was effete, barbarous, injurious to modern civilisation; all that prerogative, privilege, superstition, and caste could do to crush a great capital, was done. No consideration of the health, comfort, or needs of the great city affected Louis XIV. or Louis XV. They and their courts lived at Versailles, given up to ambition, display, or vice. Paris and the Parisians existed to produce fine things, to give splendour to the monarchy, society to the nobility, fat benefices to the church. The meanest fraternity of friars, the most scandalous abbé, the most rapacious courtier, was of more account than the corporate officials of Paris. Vested interests, sacred foundations, privileged rights, blocked every path to reform and progress. The king's palaces, the king's fortresses, the king's institutions were inviolable, sacred, immutable. An obsolete foundation of bygone superstition was the cause of God. And the caprice of a great noble was a high matter of state.

Old Paris consisted of dark and crooked lanes, because in the Middle Ages cities were so built. To build new streets, to plan fresh thoroughfares, would disturb some church, destroy some oratory, inconvenience some marquis, or displace some convent. To pave streets, to make sewers, to open spaces, to remove cemeteries, to supply pure water, and to obtain fresh air would cost money, would affect privileges, or invade some right. But the money of Parisians was required to pay the king's dues, not to improve Paris. All privileges were above the law, and as sacred as the Ark of the Covenant. 'Rights,' in the sense of privileges, came before law, before necessity, before humanity, decency, or public duty. The *salus populi* was the *infima lex*—the lowest and last consideration which authority recognised. Prescription and the will of an absolute despot — these were the sole standards of public convenience. And the result was that they made permanent and astounding accretions of public inconvenience. Something was done by Louis XIV. to add magnificence to the capital by some royal palaces, churches, and boulevards; and early in the reign of Louis XV. the spirit of social improvement, which culminated in the States-General of 1789, began to make itself felt. A few improvements were made, new streets were built on the outskirts, the cemeteries were closed, and the water supply was reformed. From the middle of the century a series of efforts were made, and not the least by Turgot and by his father, the Provost. But before privilege and prerogative the best efforts failed. It needed a revolution to reform the city of Paris. And the Revolution not only reformed, but transformed it with a vengeance.

The physical disorder of old Paris was merely the reflection — indeed, but a pale reflection — of the social, political, moral disorder of the *Old Régime*. The organisation of the city was a chaos of competing authorities, a tangle of obsolete privileges, and a nest of scandalous abuses. Anomalous courts jostled and scrambled for jurisdiction; ancient gilds and corporations blocked every reform; atrocious injustice and inveterate corruption reigned high-handed in the name of king, noble, or church. A valuable work of great research appeared (June 1889), under the direction of an important commission of historians, which throws new light from public documents on the condition of Paris under the old system.[1] We may see in it an astounding picture of misrule. The *Parlement*, the *Hôtel de Ville*, the *Châtelet*, the Governor of Paris, the Governor of the *Bastille*, the Minister of Paris, the University, the trade-gilds, the church, the religious foundations, all claim privileges, jurisdictions, rights, immunities, which cross and re-cross each other in continual conflict.

There was no real municipality, no true elective representation of the citizens. Certain officials, named by the Crown, professed to speak and to act in the name of the city. Civil and criminal justice was shared by various bodies under quite indefinite authority. The *Châtelet* absorbed in the seventeenth century no less than nineteen baronial jurisdictions; but the Archbishopric and several abbeys retained their own distinct courts. The *Châtelet*, the *Hôtel de Ville*, the church, each divided Paris into distinct sets of local subdivisions. Taxation, public works, justice, police, markets, public health, even hospitals and charities, were under the control of different authorities, with no defined limits. Interminable disputes between the different authorities ensued. Of the streets, one in ten was a *cul-de-sac.* Although the area of Paris is now six or seven times greater than it was before the Revolution, and though the population is nearly four times as great, there are little more than twice as many houses. There were 30,000 beggars in Paris. Down to 1779 the ancient foundation of St. Louis, the *Quinze-Vingts,* held an immense area between the *Louvre* and the *Palais Royal,* blocking up both, as well as the *Rue St. Honoré* and the *Rue Richelieu.* This enclosure, which was a privileged asylum, contained a population of from five to six thousand, not only licensed to beg, but bound to live by begging. It was not until 1786 that the cemetery and charnel-house of the *Saints Innocents* was suppressed. It is hardly credible that little more than a hundred years have passed since, in the densest quarter of Paris, long colonnades of grinning skulls and festering burying-grounds were standing where now we have the lovely fountain of Lescot and Goujon, transformed indeed, and almost more lovely in its transformation, in the centre of the bright and glowing square that recalls Verona or Genoa.

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[1] *L'État de Paris en* 1789. Études et Documents sur l'Ancien Régime à Paris. H. Monin. Paris. Jouast, etc., etc., 1889.

The censorship of all writings 'contrary to law, to the Catholic faith, to public morals, or judicial prerogative,' opened a wide door for arbitrary power. In the years immediately preceding the Revolution, the *Parlement* of Paris suppressed sixty-five works. One of these is condemned as tending '*à soulever les esprits.*' Another is condemned as a libel on Cagliostro! Sunday labour, eating meat in Lent, neglecting to dress the house-front on a religious procession, playing hazard, 'speaking so as to alarm the public,' are some of the grounds of a criminal sentence. The most revolting public executions were common in all parts of the city. As if to accustom all to the sight of cruel punishments, some fifty places are recorded as the scenes of these horrible public exposures. The sentence sets out the details of these executions in all their hideous particulars. *Ledit* so-and-so shall be taken to *Notre Dame*, where his hand shall be chopped off, then taken on a cart to another place, where he shall be broken alive on a wheel, and so left 'as long as it shall please God to prolong his life'; then his body shall be burned and the ashes scattered to the winds. A working-man, for stealing some linen, is condemned to be hung on a gibbet and strangled by the public executioner. It was not till 1780 that preliminary torture of an accused person was abolished: torture as part of the sentence was retained till the Revolution. The personal punishments included the pillory, branding, flogging, maiming, strangling, breaking alive, and burning. This is how the ancient Monarchy prepared the people for the guillotine.

The Revolution has swept away all this, and new Paris has sprung to life out of the Revolution, like Athene from the head of the thunderer. Out of extreme confusion, symmetry; out of ancient privilege, absolute democracy; out of paralysis of rival authorities, intense concentration of authority; out of squalor, splendour; out of barbarism, the latest devices of civilisation. Yet, for all these changes, Paris is not Chicago or Washington; it is no fine new city built on an open plain. Her nineteen centuries of history are still there; the gay boulevards stand on the foundation-stones of a thousand structures of the past; the placards on each omnibus recall the names of mighty centres of faith, wisdom, devotion, purity, love. The religious passion, the civic ardour, the republican zeal, the wit, the science, the electric will, the social ideals, the devotion to ideas — are all there as of old

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LONDON.

I. *London in* 1887.

A HUGE city like this of ours, with such boundless possibilities before it for good or for ill, on the one hand perpetually becoming more unmanageable and more exhausting to life, on the other hand, continually throwing up unexpected signs of vitality and hope — such a city stands at the parting of the ways. It is already by far the most inorganic mass of habitations that ever cumbered the planet, and to the bulk of its population, though not to the fortunate minority, it is not very cheerful. And yet, even now it is the healthiest of all capitals; and in certain aspects of a city one of the best ordered; to a very few, one of the pleasantest. Which is to prevail in the future — the boundless evil or the boundless good?

Take the first, the darker side. Here is the hugest assemblage of buildings ever piled by men on one spot of earth. For three centuries one of the great fears of thinking persons has been the enormous growth of London; and yet, till about a hundred years ago, neither its population nor its area were what we should now call abnormal. But since the last hundred years it has advanced by leaps and bounds, increasing its population fourfold within this century and its area at least ten or fifteen fold. Even in our own lifetime the area of London has increased at least fivefold, and its population between two and three fold.

So that now we have a continuous population of some 4,000,000 packed in an area of more than one hundred square miles, with nearly 2000 miles of streets, measuring hardly anywhere less than ten or eleven miles in a straight line.

Every year 70,000 souls, roughly speaking, are added by immigration and births ; every year more square miles are added to the area. Year by year some 20,000 immigrants press into this city : that is the population of a fair county town ; so that every ten years there is added to London by immigration alone a city as large as Bristol or Lisbon ; and by the entire series of causes, a new city as large as St. Petersburg or Vienna. And thus already, in this corner of the Thames, there is huddled together about one-sixth of the entire population of England. 'Where is it to stop?' we ask, as the tide of immigrants pours in, and great armies of builders are perpetually laying fresh acres of meadow under brick.

Size and numbers are not necessarily bad things *per se.* But unhappily the size and numbers of London have alarming consequences of their own. Great cities have to grow organically, with some kind of self-adaptation to their development. But the increase of London defies adaptation and adjustment. The 70,000 new souls a year arrive before London has time to consider what she can do with them. The bricks pour down in irregular heaps, almost as if, in some cataclysm or tornado, it were raining bricks out of heaven on the earth below. The huge pall of smoke gets denser and more sulphurous, stretching out, they say, some thirty miles into the country, till Berkshire, Bucks, Herts, and Kent are beginning to be polluted by its cloud. From Charing Cross or the Royal Exchange a man has to walk some five or six miles before he can see the blessed meadows or breathe the country air. Few of us ever saw more than half of the city we live in, and some of us never saw nine-tenths of it. We all live more or less in soot and fog, in smoky, dusty, contaminated air, in which trees will no longer grow to full size, and the sulphurous vapour of which eats away the surface of stone. The beautiful river — our once silver Thames — is a turbid, muddy receptacle of refuse; at times indescribably nasty and unwholesome. The water we drink at times comes perilously near to be injurious to health. Our burying-places, old and new, are a perpetual anxiety and danger. Our sewers pour forth 5,500,000 tons of sewage per week, almost all of it wastefully and dangerously discharged. An immense proportion of our working population are insufficiently housed, in cheerless, comfortless, and even unhealthy lodgings. Not a few of these are miserable dens or squalid cabins unfit for human dwelling-place. Every few years some epidemic breaks out which carries off its thousands. In some four-fifths of London the conditions of life are sadly depressing and sordid, with none of the advantages which city life affords. The amusements, such as they are, are often unworthy of us; the resources of health and recreation are too few; whilst the dangers to life, to morality, to the intelligence, are very real and ever present.

Is this monster city again to double and treble itself? its water supply to get still more precarious and defective, are its dead still more to endanger the living, its dreariness to grow vaster, and its smoke even thicker? It is a strange paradox that, whilst those who have the means are always seeking to get away from London, those who are destitute are perpetually pouring into London; whilst it is the ambition of every well-to-do Londoner to retire to freedom in the country or in the suburbs, it is the instinct of every countryman in distress to find his way up to London. There are tens of thousands who prefer to loaf or starve in the streets rather than to work in comfort in the fields. Nearly one-third of the annual increase of London is due to immigration; and the immigrants are in great measure both destitute and incapable. Is it that our agricultural system is sorely at fault; that labour in the country is become so flat, stale, and unprofitable, with opportunities so wretched, hopes so few, and life so weary and sordid, that the countryman at all risks will crave the crowd, the glare, the excitement of the city, even though it offers an almost certain wretchedness and squalor? If this be so, if our civilisation has come to this, that the labourer finds the country intolerable, a complete resettlement of rural life is at hand.

But we cannot attribute too much to this; for this vast and rapid increase of great cities is a feature of modern civilisation. It is equally marked under despotic or democratic governments, in monarchies and republics, with a peasant proprietary or a system of great domains, on both sides of the Atlantic, in every race, in both hemispheres, in Asia, Africa, and America, as well as in Europe. Paris, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, Brussels, New York, Lyons, Marseilles, Milan, Munich, Moscow, Turin, Bombay, and New Orleans have increased in fifty years more than London; and Glasgow, Hamburg, Philadelphia, and Chicago increase at a far higher ratio. So the increase of London, tremendous as it is, has nothing exceptional about it but its enormous positive volume. The increase itself, and even the rate of increase, is at bottom the result of modern industrial life and modern mechanical resources.

Of this vast problem, or wilderness of problems, it is enough to touch on one or two; and those rather of the simpler and material sort. Take the single one of water supply, a necessity of life, and the condition of health of 4,000,000 of Englishmen. It is inadequate in quantity, inconvenient in supply, very various in quality, and exposed to one or two immense risks of pollution. We are at times drinking water that is minutely but sensibly infected with deposit. Though the recuperative energy of moving water usually restores it to a fairly wholesome condition, we all know that London is not quite safe from a catastrophe. A single epidemic might any summer make the water of London as deadly as the climate of Vera Cruz. Now, the death-rate of Vera Cruz in London would mean an extra mortality of nearly 200,000. The morbid infection of the Lea and the Upper Thames would in six months produce a pestilence as appalling as any in History. And yet for twenty years we have talked about a safe and adequate water supply. The supply of London per head is below that of most Continental cities, immensely below that of most American towns, and about a quarter of that of Rome. The house-cistern system is one of those survivals of barbarism which shame modern mechanical contrivance. Its dangers, inconveniences, and nastiness are the text of every sanitary reformer. And still we live on with the lead cistern and the ball-cock, whilst our statesmen are debating about a railroad to Uganda and the delimitation of Siam.

Turn from water to fire. Our means in London of dealing with fire are far below that of every wealthy city in the world, varying from one-third to one-tenth of the provision which the most advanced nations make. It is true that London as yet has escaped, owing to its modes of construction and of warming and its general habits. But a great conflagration in London is not impossible, and the means of dealing with it, if it ever came, are ludicrously inadequate. London, with its boundless wealth and its interminable area, has a fire brigade not only relatively, but actually, less than those of Paris, Berlin, New

York, St. Petersburg, and Hamburg. Either our friends on each side of the Atlantic are foolishly timid, or we in this matter are criminally negligent.

London has swallowed up and holds festering in its midst scores and scores of graveyards which still are and long will be a danger to the living. Year by year the vast city expands, and is already reaching the more modern cemeteries which it is about to engulf, adding further dangers and fresh poison. The terrible mortality in the larger town hospitals — often double that of small country infirmaries — tells its significant and cruel tale. The whole of our arrangements for mortuaries, interment, and the due check on contagion are utterly in the rear of our resources and our science. What a picture of a civilised community at the end of the nineteenth century! A noble river turned into a huge open sewer, with its tide carrying millions of tons of refuse up and down under our eyes. Contagion scattered broadcast by carelessness, ignorance, greed. Our sewers perpetually discharging deadly gases into the rooms where our children and our young ones are asleep; the air choked with vapours injurious to animal and even vegetable life; hundreds of thousands of our workers housed in lodgings which are a standing source of corruption, misery, and disease.

Let us turn now to the other side of the picture — what our great city might be, ought to be, will be — if we in this generation and the next can only be brought in time to know our duty, our urgent necessities and our imminent dangers. I am very far from thinking all this can be remedied by Act of Parliament, and like the carter in Æsop's fable want to call upon the Hercules of Westminster. We are all so much bewildered and stunned by the whirl and scream of the parliamentary machine that if a man only says that such and such an improvement in our life ought to be accomplished, it is thought that he is asking for an Act of Parliament to carry out his end. It is a thing for society, for the rich, for the poor, for the thoughtful, for the energetic, for the clergy, for the municipalities, for the reformers, for the working men and the working women, for the people — for us all to take up and to work on till we get it. And it may be said: it is idle to appeal to the public about the death-rate of cities, about sewers, and museums, and cemeteries, and sanitary homes and parks for the people, and play-grounds for the children, and baths and wash-houses, and good schools. No! it is everything to have a true and sound notion of what we want or ought to have; to have a right ideal of a human, healthful, and happy city. We can all do something, even the humblest of us, to get a decent, habitable roof over our heads; to see that our children have water and milk to drink that is not poisoning them; we can all take decent precautions not to spread disease by neglect, folly, and ignorance. And we can all together make a real impression on those who have the wealth and the direction of society upon them, if we make them feel that you are no longer satisfied with rotting old tenements for homes, contaminated water to drink, and dismal, joyless miles of streets to live in, where the pure air of heaven is turned into a pall of smoke. We can tell those who have the wealth and the power that the lives, and the health, and the comfort of the great masses are the very first of all their duties; that the contests of Radicals and Tories are of infinitely small importance compared with the lives of the people. If it be not true that *Sanitas — Sanitas, omnia Sanitas* — if health and comfort be not the greatest of all things — they are the most urgent of all things, the foundation of all things.

It is quite true that the death-rate of London is remarkably low, but it ought to be lower. The very fact that London has so nobly distinguished itself amongst all the capitals of Europe is proof that it can do much to save life. It has a vast deal more to do. One of our greatest authorities, Sir Spencer Wells, speaking in the face of Europe as representing the sanitary reformers of this country, gave it as his deliberate judgment that the death-rate of our great cities might be, and ought to be, reduced to at least 12 per thousand *per annum* — that is, a reduction of nearly 10 per thousand, not far off half the deaths. There have been some weeks of recent years, when London approached within measurable distance of this great ideal. There are now some districts in the west inhabited by the rich where the death-rate is at times below even this limit. There is no sanitary authority which denies the possibility of reaching a death-rate of 12 per thousand. It would mean some 30,000 lives saved each year in London alone.

And at what price is the great result attainable? The cost of an African war, perhaps, ten years of engineering labour, absolutely wholesome water to drink, and plenty of it to wash *in* and to wash *with*, a rational and healthy drainage to carry off poison from our homes — sewer-gas and other abominations of civilisation in the stage of blunder would become as much things of the past as the leprosy. We should all have pure milk, clean houses, air with no sulphur fumes in it, open spaces, plenty of play-grounds, mortuaries on right principles, cemeteries wholly away from the living, and the bestowal of the dead no longer a danger to the living, systematic precautions against contagion, hospitals reconstructed on scientific methods. A little common sanitary knowledge would be made a matter of general education. There would be no exhausting hours of work, no starvation wages, no overcrowded, ill-ventilated, and dangerous factories, less drink, less brutal treatment of women and children, more civilisation, more real charity, more true religion. This is the price at which the death-rate may be reduced nearly one-half, and upwards of 30,000 lives a year saved which now perish by our folly, our neglect, and our crime.

London has already, as compared with the Continent, an exceptionally low death-rate; lower by 20, 30, even 50 per cent., than some other capitals, lower than almost any large town in Europe, except a few of the ports in the Baltic, and actually one-half of the death-rate of some Russian and many Eastern cities. The death-rate is a very complicated and treacherous field, and we know that London is the centre which attracts hundreds of thousands of youths and girls in the prime of life, who come here and are employed in service and in factories, unmarried and necessarily in average health. That undoubtedly reduces the death-rate; but the same cause applies more or less in all great towns of Europe or America, and (except that London absorbs a larger number of domestic servants than either), it does not affect London more than it affects Paris and New York.

It is quite true that merely to keep sickly children alive for a life of feebleness and disease is by no means an unmixed boon; but it will take a good deal to convince us that a high death-rate is a sign of civilisation. We may take a low death-rate as the basis and beginning of a thriving community. London has distinguished itself above all the great cities of Europe by its low death-rate. The very increase of population, which in some aspects is so alarming, is not due to any exceptionally high birth-rate in London. Indeed, the birth-rate is far below the standard of the eastern half of Europe; nay, it is below that of most cities in Europe, except the French and Italian towns.

The increase is due to the immense interval between its moderate birth-rate and its very low death-rate. Whereas the deaths exceed the births in Naples and in St. Petersburg, and the births are less than one in a thousand in excess of the deaths at Madrid, Buda-Pesth, and Rome, and the surplus of births in Paris and Lyons is less than two in a thousand, in London, where the birth-rate is below that of the majority of Continental cities, the surplus of births over deaths is thirteen and a half per thousand, or, say, about 50,000 souls a year. As compared with Naples or St. Petersburg, therefore, London saves some 50,000 human lives a year; as compared with Madrid, Pesth, and Rome, it saves, say, 45,000 lives; as compared with Paris and Lyons, it saves 40,000 lives. If it can do this, why cannot it do more? Our sanitary authorities tell us that it can do more: that 30,000 lives a year are still sacrificed to our ignorance, our folly, and our crime.

We may take in turn a few of the ways in which the lives of these 30,000 victims a year may be saved; and, with their lives, the infinite sorrow, suffering, and loss which these 30,000 deaths involve. There is a book with a most happy title, the instructive record of a most useful life — I mean *The Health of Nations*, by the well-known reformer Sir B. Richardson. In that book Dr. Richardson has collected the writings, described the schemes, and explained the work of his friend, Edwin Chadwick, the Nestor of sanitary reform, the Jeremy Bentham of the Victorian epoch, the pioneer and venerable chief of all health reformers. Edwin Chadwick, himself the philosophical executor and residuary legatee of old Jeremy Bentham as a social and practical reformer, in extreme and hale old age — he was born in the last century, in 1800 — was still in 1887 hearty and energetic in the cause to which he has devoted sixty years of his life — the great cause of the Health of Nations. The Health of Nations is quite as important as the Wealth of Nations. If the Health of Nations does not need the philosophical genius of Adam Smith, or the analytic genius of Jeremy Bentham, it needs a spirit of social devotedness quite as serious, and a practical energy in the apostle quite as great. As Burke told us that John Howard had devoted himself to a 'circumnavigation of charity,' so Edwin Chadwick sixty years ago began a 'circumnavigation of sanitation,' and after all his voyages he has at length finally put into port.

Of all problems, the most important is — water. We are drinking water that at times is contaminated with sewage, as well as with foul surface drainage, and that to a degree which under possible conditions may become deadly. I saw not long ago one of the large affluents of the Upper Thames poisoned by mineral refuse to a degree which suddenly killed the whole of the fish. This garbage — mineral poison, refuse, and decaying fish — we in London had to drink. It is true that such are the forces of nature that even mineral poison and stinking fish does not kill us always — in moderate doses. Were it not for the *vis medicatrix naturæ* in the matter of water, air, and soil, we should all be dead men some morning, the whole four millions of us together. This want of abundant pure water is one of the most crying wants of our age. There are two or three modes in which London can be supplied with wholesome water. Whether it is to come out of the chalk, whether it is to be collected out of several of the southern rivers at their head sources, whether it is to come by a vast aqueduct from Bala Lake, the West Midland hills, or from Ullswater, we need not discuss. But it has to come — pure, abundant, constant. Ultimately, I believe, there will be a main aqueduct down England from the lakes of

Westmoreland, sending off branch mains to the greater Northern and Midland towns, and pouring into London a river like the Eamont at Penrith — an inexhaustible source of pure water, just as the Claudian or the Julian Aqueducts poured their rivers into Rome — Rome, the immortal type of all that a great city ought to have in the way of water supply.

Let us away with all the nastiness and stupidities of cisterns, with their dirt, poison, discomfort, and cost; away with the ball-cock, and the bursting pipes, and all the abominations of bungling plumbers. A continuous water supply is a necessity of civilisation. But free water is as much a necessity of civilisation as pure water, or continuous water. Water, like the roadway, is a public not a private concern. Neither water, air, nor soil are manufactures like bread, clothes, and gas. A man should be no more charged personally for water by a commercial company than he should be charged a toll for walking over London Bridge, or taking the air in Hyde Park. It concerns the health of us all that no family should be stinted in their water supply, or even should stint themselves. Roadways, streets, bridges, parks, embankments, the free use of air and earth, ought to be secured us by public bodies, under public control, making no private profit, and having no private interest, and supported by common rates and taxes, and so ought the free use of water to be.

Water we want unstinted and under absolute public control for cooking, cleaning, and washing in our homes, for cleansing the streets, for fire defence, for wash-houses and public baths, for adornment and recreation. And on every one of these grounds, for the same reason that it would be criminal to make Hyde Park a private company and let them charge a toll at the gates — on all these grounds we require *Water* to be a public and not a private interest, a common advantage of a civilised community, and not a commodity for shareholders to speculate with and to sell to the needy.

Some day, I trust, we shall take in hand our rivers. We have already done much. There is a vast deal more to do. There is no positive reason why the Thames as it flows by Westminster Palace should not be as bright as when it reflects Hampton Court on its surface. Factories, works, drainage, refuse, will no longer, in secret and in defiance of Parliament, pollute its stream; the southern shores will be embanked like the northern; and the surface drainage of this metropolitan area and its whole sewage will not be discharged pell-mell into a tidal river. Some day, I believe, our two or three millions of chimneys will no longer pour out their endless pall of sulphur and soot. No poisonous gas will ever enter a house; for mechanical contrivances will suck down the products of refuse, instead of, as they now do, force them up into our homes.

Nor need we doubt that we shall one day face the great problem of health which death presents to us, in the only way in which these vast modern cities can face it — by the system of cremation. All who have studied the facts of cremation well know how idle are the objections on the score of propriety, decency, solemnity, or the concealment of crime. They know that cremation alone affords the absolutely safe means of bestowing the 80,000 corpses which each year casts upon our sorrowing hands. The ordinary objections which we hear are but melancholy remnants of childish superstition. There are objections of weight which I recognise to the full; all that repugnance which springs out of the hallowed memory of the buried remains, the local sanctity of the grave, and all its religious and beautiful associations. No one can respect these more than I do; no one can more heartily wish to preserve them. But those who feel them have never made real to their minds all the noble associations and resources of urn burial—one of the most ancient, beautiful, and religious of all modes of disposing of the dead. Cremation, in its present form, absolutely pure, effective, simple, and dignified as it is, destroys the remotest germs of deleterious power in the loved remains; but it does not annihilate the remains altogether. The solid ashes remain far more pure and perfectly than in any ancient cremation the residuum of the body, purified seven times in the fire. These ashes are appropriately closed in an urn. They can be buried, if it so be thought best, in the grave, and then the grave will contain the body, not indeed putrescent in horrible decay, but in a little harmless dust in a case. Cremation need not at all affect the practice of interment. The grave may remain undisturbed; the sacred earth may be there as now; flowers, as now, will rise up and bloom over the ashes. We the survivors may come and stand beside the tombstone, and adorn it with a wreath or a posy as now, and think over her and him who rest below. But though they rest there as truly as ever, it will not be in a long and lingering process of abomination, ghastly and dangerous to the living and dishonouring to the dead. The great and holy work of Nature, purifying the poor insensible remains which she had taken into her own bosom, will be done, not in a lingering and loathsome fashion, but with a swift and beautiful blaze of a modern scientific gas furnace which in a few hours will consume the limbs that have rested for ever, and will transmute them into a permanent and innocent dust.

But it is in the name not only of the health of the living that we need cremation in great cities, but as the sole means left to us of preserving the sanctity of the tomb, the *religio loci* of the dead. Although interment may long hold its ground in open country, and even partially combined with cremation in cities, as in early Christian ages interment and cremation existed together, urn burial of the ashes left by cremation affords us surpassing facilities for art, poetry, sentiment, and devotion in our ultimate disposal of the dead. The sacred dust in its urn can be fitly placed in all sorts of places; for it is absolutely innocuous, very moderate in bulk, and easily adapted to all kinds of uses. It may be placed in a covering tomb, or as the centre of a monumental construction. It may be placed in a church, in a cloister, in a cemetery, in a private chapel, even in a private room. Hence the receptacles of sacred ashes need not be — as now they must be or ought to be — at a wearisome distance from the vast city and the home of the survivors. We can again have our dead beside us, as they did in Roman times and in mediæval times; but now without risk or inconvenience. The ashes of the greater dead might rest even in small consecrated chapels in the very heart of the city, in our public places, or even in our parks and churches. But for the general dead there is that beautiful institution the cloister, or Campo Santo. Those who know the lovely Campo Santo at Pisa, or at Bologna, or at Genoa, even under a strict system of interment, and will imagine what such a Campo Santo or cloister could be made when combined with the Roman system of the Columbaria, or cells for the funeral urns, can see what a vast range is opened to the preservation of the remains in ways full of beauty, piety, and solemnity. The cloisters where our dead lie need not be at any distance from our midst — they will be most glorious additions to our city monuments. The old, clammy, ghastly, unsightly, useless city churchyard will regain its uses and its beauty and lose all its dangers. The new, noisy, untidy, and far-away cemeteries will also be at an end. Beautiful cloisters round the old graveyards of our parish churches will be filled with chapels, oratories, monuments, Columbaria, and devices of every kind where the pure ashes of our dead will rest each in its own urn, and with its own record, to which we can come when we please to gaze, and to recall in memory with resignation, love, and outpouring of heart. Such seems to be for great cities the burial of the future.

Nor can we doubt that our whole system of city dwelling must be reformed. Our method in England of separate houses for each family has great and precious advantages; and those who know its blessings will be sore put to sacrifice it. But sacrifice it we must at last in our great cities. As it is, it is in London for the most part the privilege of the rich and the comfortable. The enormous mass of our London workers live, as they are forced to live, in lodgings or tenements. The whole of the old, poisonous, crumbling houses of older London are doomed. And we must boldly face the necessity of rebuilding London some day for the masses in blocks. It is the plan universal on the Continent. The enormous waste of space, the indefinite increase of toil, involved in our present London system, is alone conclusive as to our practice. If London were constructed on the tenement plan of Paris or New York, London would save a third or a half of its unwieldy area. Again, it is impossible to secure adequate air, sanitary construction, sanitary appliances, cleanliness, convenience, and freedom, unless the homes of the workers be ultimately constructed on the collective system. Water, lighting, washing, drains, cleansing, provision for sickness, accident, death, and the like, and, above all, really scientific construction can only be obtained at low rents, on the collective or tenement system. We need not reduce them to the cheerless, huge, monotonous barracks which are now too often called 'model dwellings.' But we can conceive in the future the working homes of our great cities consisting of detached blocks of not less than five or six stories, each housing not less than twenty or thirty families, with common appliances for cooking, washing, bathing, exercising, playing, and reading, which would supplement, not supersede, the appliances of each apartment. And each such block should contain in itself some sort of receptacle, some kind of sick-house or infirmary, some spare rooms for the treatment of malignant diseases, and for the due disposal of the dead.

We need not here discuss the government of London or the municipality for London. That is a political and parliamentary question, and we all must desire a central, real government for London, on the sole condition that it be a good government. But for the material resources of London we need local dispersion, decentralisation, and local organisation. We can have a government a long way off from us; but we cannot have museums, libraries, baths, parks, play-grounds, schools, hospitals, and cemeteries a long way off from us and our homes. Or if we do they are of little use to us. Materially — though not governmentally — London needs to be treated departmentally, locally, and separately. We may see the signs of that movement on every side. There are the People's Palace, and the new libraries, the new town halls, the new schools, the parks, museums, the Toynbee Halls, which are springing up everywhere. The great parliamentary reform of 1885 which grouped London into sixty divisions is a step of immense importance. The parliamentary borough is about large enough for local purposes. Every parliamentary borough wants its own organisation for its museums, libraries, baths, parks, and play-grounds, and all the rest. The children's school must be within an easy walk. So must the men's reading-room, or lecture-hall, or library. The women must be able to find a good wash-house at the end of the street ; a man after his Sunday dinner must be able to take his family to get fresh air and rational recreation without walking more than a mile for it. The children and young people must be able to get to their play-grounds, or their gymnasia, or their concert, or dance, walk or talk, without being tired by the walk before they get there. For there is one thing certain, which is that all the telegraphs, and railways, and all the inventions of modern science have not made human legs and feet able to go quicker or go farther than they used ; that even tramcars and underground railways are only a very partial substitute for legs ; and that until science invents seven-leagued boots, perfectly available for every man, woman, and child, and provided gratis at every house door, the appliances of civilised life must be within an easy walk of people's homes.

To some such city, then, we may look in the future. A city where our noble river will flow so bright and clear that our young people can swim in it with pleasure as they do at Paris. A city where we shall again see the blessed sun in a clear blue sky, and watch the steeples and the towers as they do at Paris shining aloft in the bright air. A city which at night will be radiant with the electric light, in the midst of which fountains, as at Rome, will pour forth fresh rivers from the hills — a river in our case of perennial water that has fallen from Snowdon or Helvellyn. A city where all noxious refuse is absolutely unknown, where no deadly exhalations are pumped into our homes, where a child can drink a glass of water from the tap or the street fountain and sleep in its garret at home with entire impunity, a city where typhus and typhoid, smallpox, zymotic disease, shall be as rare as the plague, and as much a matter of history as the leprosy. A city where the dead shall no longer be a terror to the living, no longer despatched unremembered to some distant burial-place, but kept in our midst — at once a source of reverent memory and of beautiful adornment. A city where preventable disease is a crime to be charged against some one, and an opprobrium to the district in which it breaks out, like a murder or a burglary. A city where no child shall go untaught because it has no suitable school at hand. A city where no man should go without books, pictures, music, society, art, exercise, or religion, because there were no free libraries at hand, or no museums open when he was at leisure after work, no galleries to look at on a Sunday, no concerts, no parks, no play-grounds within reach, no free seats in a church which he cared to enter.

II. *London in* 1894.

The *Local Government Act* of 1888 has undoubtedly added a new impulse to that transformation of London, which historic causes of European range had made necessary for more than a generation, and which had been stimulated anew by the *Parliamentary Redistribution Act* of 1885. With the political aspect of these Acts, and with the policy of the London County Council, we have no occasion to concern ourselves in these pages. But the effect of this great municipal reform on the evolution of London as a historic city is too momentous to be passed in silence.

In the first place, London, which a generation ago was an inorganic mass of Parishes variously controlled by obscure Vestries, has been showing in the last decade unexpected tendencies towards organic unity and to evolve an internal organisation. The organic unity has been adjourned, in spite of heroic efforts on many sides, by the natural rivalries between the new Council and the historic Corporation, by differences between the two Houses of Parliament, and by the protracted crisis in the political world. Of all these causes (temporary as true patriots hope) nothing will be said here. In the meantime the spontaneous organisation of London into an aggregate of cities has been one of the most striking of modern movements. It has been greatly stimulated by the two political reforms which created 650,000 voters for London, and divided it into numerous boroughs. These have become real civic organisms of a manageable size ; and they have naturally developed a kind of local patriotism, such as was hardly possible to grow up in the vague welter of an unknown and unknowable 'Metropolis.'

The ultimate destiny of this huge agglomeration of houses is now vested in the hands of the vast masses of the working population. They have far more keen interests in the city than their wealthier neighbours, who look on London as a centre of labour, amusement, or struggle for a season or a period, whilst they often 'get away' from it, and hope at last to retire to a calmer place. In the meantime, the richer classes seldom know London as a whole, or care for it as their home, or regard it as having any claim on them as their city. Far different is this to the working men : to whom London is their home, their 'county,' their permanent abode. It is a city which they quit only for a few hours or days, which many of them are forced to traverse from end to end under the exigencies of their trade, where they expect to pass their old age and to lay their bones. The healthiness, convenience, pleasantness of London, are all in all to them and to their household. Mismanagement is to them, and to those dear to them, disease, discomfort, death. There is every reason to look forward to the complete transformation of London into an organic city, with a people proud of its grandeur and beauty, so soon as the new institutions have been fully matured. We have seen a local municipal patriotism break forth with extraordinary rapidity and energy in several of the new boroughs, such as Battersea, Chelsea, and St. George's-in-the-East. And this interest in city life will grow and deepen, as it has done in Midland and Northern towns, until ultimately we may look to see London as a whole develop the spirit of pride and attachment which the great cities of the Middle Ages bred in their citizens of old.

The big collective problems which deal with Water, with Fire, with the Sick, with the Dead, with central Communications, and with the Housing of the poor population — can only be undertaken by a supreme central municipality, but not by vestries, or boroughs. And unhappily in London no supreme municipality has as yet a free hand, or can count on the aid of the Legislature. But in spite of division of authority and legislative obstacles, not a little has been done and much more has been attempted and prepared in every one of these departments. It is fair to say that both the ancient Corporation and the County Council have striven to attain these ends; and in not a few cases with combined energies and resources. And although in the case of the Water Supply no final solution has been reached, an immense amount of scientific study has been directed to the problem; and a great improvement both in quantity and quality has been obtained. At the same time determined efforts and a large expenditure have visibly improved the condition of our great river; and fill us with hope that living men may yet come to see a pure and healthy Thames.

The great problem of how to bring London up to the level of its position in the world and to make it a really noble and commodious city has been continually attacked: as yet with incomplete results and a better understanding of the difficulties which beset it. It is mainly a financial and political question. The greatest and richest city in the world is also the city which now seems to practise the most rigid economy in its own improvement. With the greatest river of any capital in Europe, with boundless energy, wealth, and opportunities, London is put to shame by Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and New York. London, it is true, has no mind to follow the monstrous extravagance which has imposed crushing burdens on so many Italian cities. But it will not even follow the honourable example of Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham, and Nottingham. The London Council is housed in hired makeshifts, and London communications are indefinitely adjourned. This, however, is entirely a financial and political question. With the existing system of finance and in the equilibrium of political parties, it has been the fixed resolve of the Council to throw no fresh burdens on the occupying ratepayer.

Yet in spite of legislative obstacles, within five years the number of the public Parks, Open Spaces, and Play-grounds has been more than doubled, and their public usefulness immeasurably increased. The material, the stations, and the staff devoted to extinguish fires have been very largely augmented; and further increase is contemplated; so that the army required for fighting urban conflagrations may ere long be brought up to the level of modern civilisation. Great efforts are also being made to arrest infectious disease, to suppress nuisances, to prevent contamination of food, to condemn insanitary dwellings, to secure just weights and measures, and to re-house the people in comfortable and healthy homes. When we consider how much has been done within the last few years to increase the healthiness, the convenience, the pleasantness of London for the masses who inhabit it in permanence, there is ground to trust that the reorganisation of the great city has begun. Even in the costly and difficult problem of trans-fluvial communications the work has been taken in hand. London presents in this matter more arduous problems than any European capital. But the Tower Bridge, the Blackwall Tunnel, the steam-ferry, and the rebuilding of old bridges that is projected, will do something to meet this urgent want.

The side wherein London still most visibly halts is in the street improvements and new communications so loudly demanded for years. This, however, is an operation enormously costly and beset with complex parliamentary difficulties. Until these are solved, and the conflict on the form and incidence of municipal taxation is decided, we cannot expect much to be done. But the question has already been stirred in all its forms; and many schemes have been put before the public and parliament. London has many noble features, in its great river, its fine parks, its position astride of the Thames, and its northern heights gradually sloping down to the embankment. But it has vast arrears of work to make up before it can be counted a commodious or splendid city. There are large parts of London where crooked lanes and decayed houses remain almost as they were built after the fire of 1666. The urgent problem now is to secure better thoroughfares from north to south. Below Vauxhall Bridge not a single carriage bridge has been added for two generations, whilst the population has increased threefold. The trans-fluvial communication, including the enlargement and rebuilding of existing bridges, and the approaches to these both north and south, needs at this hour to be at least doubled in number and carrying power.

Amongst the larger problems still awaiting solution for the material improvement of London are : —

1. The completion of the embankment of the river on both sides between Battersea and Blackfriars, with due provision for continual easy access to the embankment, and with docks at suitable stations within it.
2. Improved access to the existing bridges, north and south.
3. New carriage bridges, at least at Lambeth and at Charing Cross.
4. A direct avenue connecting the three great northern railway termini with the Waterloo terminus and with Charing Cross.
5. Connections of Holborn with the Strand, the British Museum with Somerset House, Victoria Terminus with South Kensington and Lambeth, Ludgate Hill with Cheapside.
6. The reconstruction of Covent Garden and its approaches and connection of it with the Courts of Justice and with the north.
7. The reconstruction of the Main Drainage system, including the discharge of sewage to the sea.
8. The re-housing of the people displaced from decayed insanitary areas.

The minor improvements in every outlying parish and suburb are far too many and complex to be treated here.

These undertakings, together with a suitable building for the government of London to work in, may occupy the energy and resources of a whole generation. It is impossible to calculate the enormous loss in money, in comfort, in health, in labour, wasted by millions of people struggling to reach each other through crowded, narrow, and circuitous streets. Nor can we easily estimate the evils of pinching the government of a great capital by niggardly supply of the material appliances of its task.

The first thing is to make our city a healthful home for the people. The next is to furnish it abundantly with all the resources of civic life — one of the primary of which is adequate means of transit. The third is to invest it with dignity, impressiveness, and beauty. The people who now have the destinies of their own city in their own hands will not long remain satisfied with squalor, ugliness, and discomfort. The civic patriotism of London has lain dormant for centuries, but in our generation it is reviving. And we may hope that ere the twentieth century is far advanced, it may create a new London worthy of its past history and its vast opportunities.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SACREDNESS OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS.[1]

A TORSO from the hand of Pheidias, a portrait by Titian, a Mass by Palestrina or Bach, a lyrical poem of Milton, an abbey church of the thirteenth century — are all works of art; matchless, priceless, sacred: such as man on this earth will never replace, nor ever again see. They are, each and all, that which are a great life, or a memorable deed: once spent, they can never be repeated in the same way again, and yet, once lived, or once achieved, they make the world to be for ever after a better place. And these inimitable works are not only amongst the heirlooms of mankind; but they are records of the life of our fathers, which concentrate in a single page, canvas, block of stone, hymn, or it may be, portal, as much history as would fill a library of dull written annals. From the point of view of beauty, of knowledge, of reverence, these works of art are, as the historian of Athens said, 'an everlasting possession.'

Yet how strangely different is the care with which we treat the statue, the picture, the music, the poem, from the treatment we give the church — the church, one would think the most sacred of all. It is not so with us. We *preserve* the torso, or the portrait — we *restore* the church. We give it a new inside and a fresh outside. We deck it out in a brand-new suit to cover its nakedness. A committee of subscribers choose the style, the century, into which it shall be transposed ; they wrangle in meetings, in rasping letters, and corrosive pamphlets, as to carrying on an early-pointed arcade in the lady-chapel, or as to introducing a gridiron mass of perpendicular tracery in the west window. The chapter, the subscribers, the amateur archæologists, each have their pet style, sub-style, and epoch, their fancy architect, or infallible authority in stone, antiquities, and taste. Between them the church is gutted, scraped, refaced, translated into one of those brand-new, intensely mediæval, machine-made, and engine-turned fabrics, which the pupils of the great man of the day turn out by the score. This is how we treat the church.

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[1] An address given at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, 1887. *Contemporary Review*, vol. 52.

Imagine the tenth part of this outrage applied to statue, picture, hymn, or poem. Suppose the Trustees of the British Museum were to call in Mr. Gilbert and commission him to *restore* the Parthenon torsos, to bring the fragments from the Mausoleum up to the style of the Periclean era. Suppose the Ministry of Fine Arts in France *restored* the arms of the Melian Aphrodite in the Louvre, or the Pope *restored* the legs, arms, and head to the torso beloved by Buonarroti. Europe, in either case, would ring with indignation and horror. Time was, no doubt, when these things were done, and done by clever sculptors in better ages of art than ours. But we may be fairly sure that it will never be done again.

Pictures, we know, have been restored ; and, perhaps, on the sly are restored still. Years ago I saw a miscreant painting over the 'Peter Martyr' of Titian in the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo ; and it would have been a condign punishment if the fire which consumed it had caught him red-handed in the act. They have daubed Leonardo's 'Cenacolo' till there is nothing but a shadow left. But though a sacrilegious brush may now and then be raised against an ancient Master (just as murder, rape, and arson are not yet absolutely put down), even our great-great-grandfathers, who made the grand tour and 'collected' in the days of Horace Walpole, never added powder and a full wig to one of Titian's Doges, or asked Zoffany to finish a chalk study by Michael Angelo.

I do not know that there ever was a time when people restored a poem or a piece of music. Certainly Colley Cibber restored some of Shakespeare's plays, introducing *bon ton* into 'Hamlet' and 'Richard III.' And Michael Costa would interpolate brass into Handel's 'Messiah.' But in any world that claims a title to art, taste, or culture, to falsify a note or a word, either in music or in poem, is rank forgery and profanity — felony without benefit of clergy. Manuscripts are searched with microscopes and collated by photographs to secure the *ipsissima verba* of the author. And the editor who 'improved' a single line of 'Lycidas' would be drummed out of literature to the 'Rogue's March.'

In our day, happily, poem, music, picture, and statue are preserved with a loving and religious care. Picture and statue are cased in glass and air-tight chambers; for we would not beteem the winds of heaven visit their face too roughly. The rude public are kept at arms'-length; and in some countries are not suffered so much as to look at the books, engravings, and paintings for which they have paid. Worship of an old poet is carried to the point of printing his compositions in the authentic but unintelligible cacography he used. And as to old music, reverence is carried so far that too often we do not perform it at all, I suppose for fear that a passage here and there may not be interpreted aright.

Go to Sir Charles Newton or Mr. Murray, and tell him that the 'Theseus' and 'Ilissus' in the Elgin Room (I use the old conventional names) are sadly dilapidated on their surface, and that you could *restore* their skins to the original polish; or propose to repaint the Panathenaic frieze in the undoubted colours used by Pheidias. Tell Sir Frederick Burton or Mr. Poynter that the lights in the 'Lazarus' and the 'Bacchus and Ariadne' have plainly gone down; and that you will carry out the ideas of Sebastian and Titian by heightening them a little. Tell him that 'Alexander and the Family of Darius' is full of anachronisms, and that you will re-robe the figures with strict attention to chronology and archæology. I should like to see the looks of these public servants when you proposed it, as I should like to have seen Michael Angelo watching the 'Breeches-maker' who clothed the naked saints in his Sistine 'Last Judgment.'

Statue, picture, book, music, are preserved intact with reverential awe. Not but what some of them have suffered too by time, get utterly dilapidated, are in risk of perishing, have become mere fragments, or offer tempting ground for ambitious genius. The 'Aphrodite' of Melos is still a riddle: the torso of the Vatican is a very sphinx in stone, a mass of marble ever propounding enigmas, ever rejecting solutions. It is a block as it stands: head, arms, legs, and action would make it a statue. The 'Cenacolo' of Milan has long been a mere ghost of a fresco, faint as the last gleam of a rainbow. There are still whole choruses of Æschylus to *restore;* and Shakespeare is certainly not responsible for every scene in his so-called works. Literature and Art are full of works, either injured by time, or left incomplete by their authors, or such as modern research could easily purge of their anachronisms, inconsistencies, and general defects.

It is in one art only that modern research dares this outrage. Great works of architecture are not exactly on the same footing with great works of sculpture, of painting, of music, of poetry. They differ from all; and I will presently consider these differences. But great works of architecture are, like all great works of art, matchless, priceless, and sacred. They are absolutely beyond renewal. It is easier to copy Titian's 'Entombment' than the portal of Chartres or Notre Dame — as they once stood, and stand no more. Each great work of architecture is also *unique:* completely distinct from every work that ever was or ever will be. Giotto's Campanile, the Duke's Palace at Venice, stand alone — must we say stood alone? — like Hamlet or Lear, 'remote, sublime, and inaccessible.' A man who wanted to 'continue' Giotto's Campanile, or add a new story, and enlarge the Palace at Venice, is the kind of man who would 'continue' the *Iliad* or dramatise the *Divine Comedy* for the Lyceum stage.

In all ways the great building is worthy of a deeper reverence, is consecrated with a profounder halo of social and historical mystery than any picture or any statue can be. Of the five great arts, that of building is the only one which adds to its charm of beauty the solemnity of the *genius loci.* It is the one art which is immovably fixed to place; the rest are migratory or independent of space. Poetry and music, not being arts of form, are not confined to any spot. Statues and paintings, though they can only be seen in *some* spot, may be carried round the world and set up in museums and galleries. But the building belongs for ever to the place where it is set up. It is incorporated with the surroundings, the climate, the people, the site, where it first rose. No museum can ever hold it; it is not to be catalogued, mounted, framed, or classed like a coin or a mummy in a glass case. It stands for ever facing the same eternal hills, the same ever-flowing river, rising into the same azure or lowering sky into which it rose at first in joy or pride. It may be as old as the Pyramids, or as recent as Queen Anne. But in any case it has watched generation after generation come and go; for thousands of years men have passed under that portal; for centuries the bell has tolled from that tower. The steps of this colonnade have been worn by the feet of Pericles, Sophocles, Plato, and Socrates; under this arch passed the Antonines, Trajan, and Charlemagne; Saint Louis used to pray standing on this very floor, six centuries and a half ago; this chapter-house was for two centuries the cradle of the Mother of Parliaments throughout the world.

No other art whatever, with the partial exception of large frescoes,[1] neither music nor poetry, has this *religio loci*, this consecration of some spot by hallowed association, which is bound up with the very life of every great building. In the whole range of art there is nothing so human, so social, so intense, as this spirit which has made the practice of pilgrimage an eternal instinct of humanity. To pass from the roar of Paris or London to sit beside the Venus or the Theseus is delight. We all feel rest and awe before a Madonna of Raphael, a portrait of Titian, or listening to Mozart's 'Requiem,' or to 'Paradise Lost.' But to me, a son of earth, no art comes home, seeming at once so intense and so infinite, as when I wander round the old piazzas at Florence and Venice, or pace about the Forum or the Abbey. There art, memory, veneration, patriotism, the pathos, the endurance, the majesty of humanity, seem to me to blend in one overpowering sensation. Who can say where Art ends and Veneration begins?

Thus every ancient building, whether it be a successful work of art or not, is sacred by its associations, and is a standing record in itself. But an ancient building is a far more definite product of the society out of which it grew and the civilisation which created it, than any statue or any painting, almost more than any music, or any poem. It is usually a far less personal and individual act of imagination than statue, painting, poem, or music. It is a collective and developing work, the creation of a series of minds, the inspiration of a given epoch, and of a particular people. No great statue, or painting, or piece of music, or poem, was ever produced by a group of artists. Most great buildings were. The Parthenon is in what is called the Doric not the Ionic style; and we think of Pheidias, the sculptor, rather than Ictinus, the architect, as the genius who created it. Hardly a single great church, till the age of Wren, can be positively assigned to one sole author, as we assign the 'Agamemnon' positively to Æschylus, or the Sistine Madonna to the *stessa mano* of Raphael. A few, a very few, buildings bear the stamp of one unique genius, such as the Campanile at Florence, the Sainte Chapelle, and our St. Paul's. Statues, paintings, poems, and music are each the complete conception of one mind, the execution of one hand. As a rule, buildings are the accumulating conception of several minds, the execution of successive generations.

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[1] Such frescoes as those of the Arena Chapel at Padua, or the Sistine Chapel at Rome, belong to architecture as much as to painting, almost as much as the frieze of the Parthenon is a part of the building.

It is no doubt this character in buildings which has made us slow to treat them with the reverence and love that we show so readily to works in the other arts. Other works are the creations of some master whose name, story, and individuality we know. A Madonna is by Raphael or Bellini; a poem is by Dante or Milton; a Mass is by Bach or Mozart; a statue is by Pheidias or Michael Angelo. And we cannot conceive any other hand or brain so much as touching the work. But the Church of the Holy Wisdom at Constantinople is the work of the Byzantine School; the Cathedral of Chartres is the work of builders in the Middle Ages; the Abbey, the Tower of London, the Louvre, the Duomo and the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence, represent whole centuries of successive evolution in art and manners. Statues and paintings are the creations of single Masters. Buildings are the collective growth of Ages.

But for this very reason, what buildings lose in personal interest they gain in human interest, in social significance, in historical value. The multiplicity of parts in a great edifice, the vast range of its power over an infinite series of human souls, the sacrifices, the endurance, the concentration of efforts by which it was built up, and the countless generations of men who have contributed to its beauty or have been touched by its majesty, give it a collective human glory, which no statue or picture ever had — a glory which is exceeded only by the great poems of the world. A Madonna was struck off in a few months, and since it was put on canvas has been seen by some tens of thousands, of whom some thousand came from it better men. A statue, a song, a lyric, appeals to a definite number in a definite way, but hardly to a whole people on every side of their souls. But take a great building — a great group of buildings at its highest point — say the Acropolis at Athens, the Forum at old Rome, the Papal edifices at modern Rome, the Piazzas at Florence, Venice, and Verona, Notre Dame as it stood unrestored, our own great group at Westminster — in vast range of impression and invention they are certainly surpassed by the Bible, the *Iliad*, the *Divine Comedy*, or the works of Shakespeare, but by no other creative work of man ever produced. The civilisation of whole races is petrified into them. For centuries, tens of thousands of men have toiled, thought, imagined, and poured their souls into the work. It would be an education in art to have known by heart that glorious façade of Notre Dame, as it once was, when every leaf in its foliage, every fold in the drapery, every smile in every saint's face was an individual conception of some graceful spirit and some deft hand — to have known every legend which blazed in ruby, azure, and emerald in the countless lights of nave, choir, aisle, and transept, the thousands of statues which peopled it within and without, the carved stalls and screens, the iron, brass, and silver and gold work, the pictures, the frescoes, the tombs, the altars, the marbles, the bronzes, the embroideries, the ivories, the mosaics. A great national building is the product of a nation, and is the school of a nation. And for this reason it should stand in our reverence and love next to the great poems of a nation. Next to the *Iliad* and the *Trilogy* comes the Parthenon. Next to the *Divine Comedy* the Duomo of Florence and its adjuncts. Next to Shakespeare and Milton the Abbey.

There is thus a peculiar quality in the great historic building which marks it off from all other works of art. It is in a special sense a *living* work. It is not so much a *work* as a *being*. It has an organic life, organic growth; it has a history, an evolution of its own. The Pantheon at Rome has gone on living and growing for nearly nineteen centuries, the Castle of St. Angelo for nearly seventeen, the Church of the Holy Wisdom for thirteen, and our own Tower for eight centuries; and all of them are still living buildings, and not at all ruins or 'monuments.' A building may undergo amazing permutations, like Hadrian's Mausoleum, the baths of Diocletian, or the Church of Justinian, and yet retain its identity and its vital energy. A building is indeed rather an *institution* than a *work;* and, like all institutions, it has its own evolution, corresponding with the social evolution on which it depends, and of which it is the symbol. Our Tower, Abbey, Palace of Westminster, and Windsor Castle are much more like our Monarchy, Parliament, and Judicial system than they are like a Madonna by Raphael, or a statue by Pheidias. They are not objects to be looked at in museums. They are organic *lives*, social *institutions*, historic *forces*.

Now I hold that all national, historic, monumental buildings whatever, however small or humble, partake of this character, and ought to have the same veneration and sacredness bestowed on them. Every building that has a definite public history, and has been dedicated to public use, be it church, tower, bridge, gateway, hall, is a national institution, is a public possession, and has become *sacrosanct*, as the Romans said. In the law of Rome, the ground in which one who had the right buried a dead body became *ipso facto*, *religious;* it ceased to be private property, it could not be bought or sold, transferred or used. It was for ever dedicated to the dead, and reserved from all current usage. So a building, which our dead forefathers have dedicated to the service of generations, should be *sacrosanct* to the memory of the Past.

Its size, its beauty, its antiquity, its celebrity, are matters of degree not of principle. Essentially it is a national possession, an irreparable monument, a sacred record, as the great Charter and 'Domesday' are. These records have become so pitiably few, their possible value is so incalculably great, their unique, inimitable, priceless nature as relics is so obvious, that wantonly to destroy one of them ought to be treated as a public crime, like smashing the Portland Vase, or defacing the Charter and 'Domesday.' It is preposterous that an incumbent and his churchwardens, a dean and chapter, a mayor and aldermen, a warden and benchers, a highway board, or a borough corporation, should be free to deface a national relic, and falsify a national record. At the very least, a parish church should be as well protected by law as a parish register is against wanton defacement and falsification of its contents. In principle the idea is admitted by the need for a 'faculty.' But a 'faculty' is become a melancholy form; and no 'faculty' is needed by the trustees who sell an ancient edifice to a builder's speculation, by the highway board which carts away a tower or a gate, or 'restores' and 'improves' a bridge.

Our glorious Milton said, in a passage as immortal as his poems, 'as good almost kill a Man as kill a good Book.' We may add: 'As good almost kill a good Book as kill an ancient Building.' The one is as irrecoverable as the other; it may teach us as much; it should affect us even more. See how the words of that most Biblical of passages, which Isaiah himself might have uttered, apply to the building as much as to the book. Is not a great historic abbey 'an immortality rather than a life'? Is not the cathedral, too, 'the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life'? Are not these 'restorers' and 'improvers' of our public monuments the men who 'spill that seasoned life of man preserved and stored up in' the buildings which our forefathers raised, in which their lives were recorded, and their best work was bestowed?

Every work of art has in it 'the precious life-blood of a master-spirit;' but a work of great architecture and historic importance has in it the precious life-blood of many a master-spirit. And the humblest ancient monument, though it be a petty parish church or a market cross, has this 'seasoned life of man preserved in it.' Like the picture, the statue, the poem, in every work of art, the precious life-blood of the master-spirit which informs it should make it sacred from sacrilegious hands. But the building has also that which picture, statue, and poem have not — the *religio loci*. 'The place whereon thou standest is holy ground,' may be said of every historic monument. Nay more. The ancient building is marked by a filiation of master-spirits. Like the Saxon 'Chronicle,' or the 'Annals of Waverley,' it is not a fixed but a current record. It is a continuous and moving monument — at once contemporary like annals, and yet organic like a history. The great Charter, 'Domesday,' the Bayeux tapestry, are records of given moments in the national life. But in the Abbey and its precincts may be seen the works of English hands, continuously for a thousand years, generation after generation, typical contemporary work. Now, the humblest old parish church partakes of this quality of continuous typical work for centuries.

It is monstrous that any man, any body of men, even any single generation, should claim the right in the name of property, or their office, or their present convenience, to destroy in a moment the continuous work of centuries, to desecrate the best work of their forefathers, and to rob their own descendants of their common birthright. Who gave this rare and inimitable value to the ancient building? Not they, nor even the first founders of it. Generation after generation stamped their mark on it, recorded their thoughts in it, poured into it their precious life-blood. It is an aggregate product of their race, a social possession of all. Whence came the *religio loci* which casts a halo over it? From no single author, from no set of builders: from a long succession of ancestral generations to whom it has grown a sacred and national symbol. That precious value which time, society, the nation, have given it, is now at the mercy of any man, or any board.

There was a noble doctrine in the old Roman Law, which may be stated in the words of Gaius: *Sanctae quoque res, velut muri et portae, quodammodo divini iuris sunt. Quod autem divini iuris est, id nullius in bonis est.* 'Things like city walls, city gates, are sacrosanct; and, in a sense, under divine sanction. But whatever is under the divine sanction cannot be the subject of property.' That is to say, historic buildings which form part of the national records are consecrated by the past and dedicated to the future, and are taken out of the arbitrary disposal of the present. This principle goes deeper than the making them public property. They are not property at all — not to be used, consumed, and adapted at the passing will of the day. They are not the chattels of the *public*. They are not *public property;* they are *consecrated* to the *nation.* Each generation is too apt to ask, like a famous peer, 'May I not do what I please *with mine own?*' No! national possessions are much more than public property. They are not 'the own' of a passing body. They are the inheritance which the past is bequeathing to the future, and of which we are but trustees. We have no absolute rights over them at all; we have only the duty to preserve them.

So great is the difference between our treatment of old pictures, statues, poems, and songs, and our treatment of old buildings, that there must be some ground for our practice. Certainly there is. Architecture is an art essentially different from other arts; and buildings are not simple works of art. A building intended to shelter and contain men, is, like clothing, food, and firing, a necessity of man's material existence, and not, as picture, statue, poem, and song are, means of giving grace and joy to man's life. Hence every building is first and principally a necessity and a material utility, and a work of beauty afterwards (if it ever become so at all). The most restless generation does not 'restore' and 'convert' either picture, statue, poem, or song, as if it were an old gown or a piece of carpet, simply because they are not *conveniences* but *enjoyments.* A generation which finds an old building inconvenient, is cruelly tempted to 'convert,' 'adapt,' extend, or alter it. Again, the building not only occupies a surface of ground enormously greater than picture, statue, or book, but it occupies immovably for ever one definite spot on the planet; and in the perpetual changes of social life that may easily become an intolerable burden on the living. As the building occupies unalterably a given spot which is sometimes a primary necessity for active life, the alternative not seldom presents itself of adaptation or destruction. Thirdly: whilst picture, statue, or book can be preserved almost indefinitely by moderate care, the building requires incessant work, sometimes partial renewal of its substance, at times elaborate constructive repair to prevent it from actually tumbling down.

There are thus a set of grounds, some on one side some on the other, which mark off the building from all other works of art. There are three main grounds which tempt the living — compel the living — to deal with it from time to time.

First, it is primarily a material utility, and only secondarily a work of art.

Next, it occupies a very large and unalterable spot.

Lastly, it requires constant labour to uphold it.

On the other hand, there are three main grounds which make the ancient building more sacred than any other work of man's art.

First, it alone has the true *religio loci.*

Secondly, it is a *national* creation, a *social* work of art, in the supreme sense.

Thirdly, it is a *national record,* in a way that no other work of art is, because it is almost always both a collective and a continuous record.

Now the action and reaction of these two competing sets of impulses undoubtedly makes the protection of our ancient buildings a very complex and very difficult problem. Both sets are very powerful, both act in varying degrees, and the final compromise between the rival sets of claims is necessarily the work of much anxious discrimination. I venture to maintain that the complication and antagonism is such that no hard-and-fast doctrine can be laid down. Each case must stand on its merits. Each decision must be the laborious reconcilement of conflicting interests. Our cause has suffered from over-arbitrary dogmas and some affectation of contempt for the plain necessities of material existence. Every one outside the Tuileries laughed at Edmond About, when he told the Romans of to-day that the only thing left for them was 'to contemplate their ruins.' I wish myself that they had contemplated their ruins a little longer, or had allowed us to contemplate them, instead of seeking to turn Rome into a third-rate Paris. But we shall be laughed at if we ever venture to tell the nineteenth century that it must contemplate its ruins.

The trust imposed on the century is not to contemplate its ruins, but to protect its ancient buildings. Now that will be done if the century can learn to feel the true *sacredness* of ancient buildings, if it will admit that the building stands on the same footing with picture, statue, and poem, that it is *unique*, inimitable, irreplaceable ; and, above all, has its own consecration of place, continuity, and record. Admit this first, and then we will consider the claims of the present, their convenience, and their means. But the burden of proof ought always to be pressed imperiously *against* those whose claim is to destroy, to convert, or to extend. When every other means fail, when irresistible necessity is proved, it may be a sad duty to remove an ancient building, to add to it, or to incorporate it. But this can never justify what we now call 'restoring,' a process which makes it as much like the original as Madame Tussaud's figures are like the statesman or general they represent. It can never justify *re-decoration* — cutting out ancient art-work and replacing it by new work or machine work. It can never justify archæological exercises — I mean the patching on to old buildings new pieces of our own invention, which we deliberately present as fabrications of the antique. These things are mere Wardour Street spurious *bric-à-brac,* no more like ancient buildings than a schoolboy's iambics are like Æschylus. How often do committees, dean and chapter, public offices, and even Parliament itself, treat our great national possessions as if they were mere copy books, on the face of which our modern architects were free to practise the art of composing imitations of the ancients. Such buildings become much like a Palimpsest manuscript; whereon, over a lost tragedy of Sophocles, some wretched monk has scribbled his barbarous prose. How often is the priceless original for ever lost beneath the later stuff!

In these remarks I have strictly confined myself to general principles: first, because I do not pretend to any special or technical knowledge which would entitle me to criticise particular works, but mainly because I believe our true part to be the maintenance of general principles. If we fall into discussions of detail we may lose hold of our main strength. We have to raise the discussion into a higher atmosphere than that of architectural anachronism. We cannot pitch our tone too high. It is not architectural anachronism which we have to check: it is the safety of our national records, our national self-respect, the spirit of religious reverence that we have to uphold. We have to do battle against forgery, irreverence, and desecration. Let us raise a voice against the idea that any work of art can ever, under any circumstances, be really 'restored;' against the idea that any ancient art-work can usefully be 'imitated,' against the idea that ancient monuments are a *corpus vile* whereon to practise antiquarian exercises; against the habit of forging spurious monuments, as the monks in the Middle Ages forged spurious charters; finally, against the idea that the *convenience* of *to-day* is always to outweigh the *sacredness* of the *past.*

Strangely enough, the foes of ancient buildings are too often those of their own household. Amongst the worst sinners of all are the public departments, corporations, and the clergy. The forgers, the destroyers, the mutilators, are too often the official guardians of our old monuments. One can see why. They are the people who use them, to whom they are a necessity and a convenience. Naturally they are constantly tempted to give them greater practical usefulness, to convert them to modern requirements, and, above all, to make them look smart. We, of the public, gaze at an old monument, and then we go home. We laymen enjoy an old thirteenth-century church just as it is; but to the official, to the priest, the old hall or the old church is the place where his official work is done. And a dreadful temptation besets them both to make the seat of official work adequate for its office, and appear to be up to the level of our time. A natural sentiment; but one false and dangerous. Let us resist it in the name of the nation, of the past and of the future. These things are sacred by what they have seen and known, by what they teach, by what they record. The true solution is this. If the present age needs new public offices, bigger churches, new halls, bridges, gates, let them build new ones. If it needs to exercise itself in architectural Latin verses, let it do it with new bricks, new stones, and on a site of its own choosing.

I am very far from thinking that this needs Acts of Parliament; but the sacredness of ancient buildings can be guaranteed by law. Pictures, statues, poems, are now safe from modern Vandals by the force of public opinion and true feeling for art and antiquity. The owner of a Raphael or a Titian, of a Greek statue, does not need to be restrained by an Act of Parliament or an injunction in Equity against the temptation to paint over his picture, or to add new limbs to his marble. We never hear the owner of some princely gallery say to his friends: 'You remember what a dingy thing my Veronese used to be, how poor in colour my Madonna was, and what a stick the Venus looked, with one arm and no nose. Well! I had Rubemup, R.A., down from the Academy, and you see the Veronese is as bright as an Etty; my Raphael might go into a new altar at the Oratory, and the Venus is fit for the Exhibition!' We never hear this; but we do hear a dean or a rector take a party over the 'restored' cathedral and church, and point out how the whole of the stone-work has been refaced, how new tracery has been added 'from Scott's designs,' and how the Jacobean wood-carving has been carted away to Wardour Street. And now the old church looks like a new chapel-of-ease at a fashionable sea-side place. And the Bishop comes down in lawn and blesses the restored and re-consecrated building, and the rector gives a garden party, and the county paper brags about the liberal subscription lists. What we have to do, is to make them all understand that the whole business is profanation, ignorance, and vulgarity.

Ancient buildings certainly cannot be treated as 'exhibits,' to be cased in glass, and displayed in a museum. All their powers, their vitality and solemnity would disappear. They have in most cases to be kept fit for use; and in some rare cases they may have to be completed, where the kind of work they need is within our modern resources. As to Palladian work that may possibly be attempted; but as to true mediæval work of the best periods, it is absolutely impossible. No fine carving of this age can be remotely reproduced or imitated by us now in feeling and manner. The current of gradual growth for the best mediæval work has been broken for centuries. And we cannot now recover the tradition. The archaic naïve grace of a thirteenth-century relief, the delicate spring of foliage round capital or spandrel, are utterly irrecoverable. There does not exist the hand or the eye which can do it. To cut out old art-work wholesale, and insert new machine carving, is exactly like cutting out a Madonna in an altar-piece, or inserting a new head on to a Greek torso. What we have to do is to uphold the fabric as best we may, and preserve the decoration as long as we can.

There is need to educate the public, especially the official public, and above all the clergy, to understand all that is meant by the sacredness of ancient buildings. The business is not so much to discuss solecisms in style and blunders in chronology, as to make men feel that our national monuments are dedicated by the past to the nation *for ever*, and that each generation but holds them as a sacred trust for the future.

CHAPTER XVII.

PALÆOGRAPHIC PURISM.[1]

In this age of historical research and archaic realism there is growing up a custom which, trivial and plausible in its beginnings, may become a nuisance and a scandal to literature. It is the custom of re-writing our old familiar proper names; of re-naming places and persons which are household words: heirlooms in the English language.

At first sight there seems something to be said for the fashion of writing historical names as they were written or spoken by contemporary men. To the thoughtless it suggests an air of scholarship and superior knowledge, gathered at first hand from original sources. Regarded as the coat-armour of some giant of historical research, there is something piquant in the unfamiliar writing of familiar names; and it is even pleasant to hear a great scholar talk of the mighty heroes as if he remembered them when a boy, and had often seen their handwriting himself. When Mr. Grote chose to write about K*e*k*rops*, K*rete*, K*leopatra*, and *Peri*k*les*, we were gratified by the peculiarity; and we only wondered why he retained *Cyrus*, *Centaur*, *Cyprus*, and *Thucydides*. And when Professor Freeman taught us to speak of 'Charles the Great,' and the *Battle of Senlac*, we all feel that to talk of *Hastings* would be behind the age.

But, in these days, the historical schools are growing in numbers and range. There are no longer merely Attic enthusiasts, and Somersætan champions, but other ages and races have thrown up their own historiographers and bards. There are 'Middle-English' as well as 'Old-English' votaries, — and Eliza-ists, and Jacob-ists, and Ann-ists. Then there are the French, the German, the Italian, the Norse schools, to say nothing of Ægyptologists, Hebraists, Sanscritists, Accadians, Hittites, Moabites, and Cuneiform-ists. It becomes a very serious question, what will be the end of the English language if all of these are to have their way, and are to re-baptize the most familiar heroes of our youth and to re-spell the world-famous names.

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[1] *Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1886, vol. xix. No. 107.

Each specialist is full of his own era and subject, and is quite willing to leave the rest of the historical field to the popular style. But there is a higher tribunal beyond; and those who care for history as a whole, and for English literature in the sum, wonder how far this revival in orthography is to be carried. Let us remember that, both in space and in time, there is a vast body of opinion of which account must be taken. There is the long succession of ages, there is the cultivated world of Europe and America, in both of which certain names have become traditional and customary. And if every knot of students is to rename at will familiar persons and historic places, historical tradition and the custom of the civilised world are wantonly confused. This true filiation in literary history is of far more importance than any alphabetic precision.

About forty years ago, Mr. Grote began the practice of re-setting the old Greek names; but his spelling has not commended itself to the world. There seems much to be said for *Themistokles* and *Kleon;* but when we were asked to write *Korkyra* and *Krete*, we felt that the filiation of *Corcyra* and *Crete* with Latin and the modern tongues was needlessly disturbed. *Kirke, Kilikia, Perdikkas, Katana,* seemed rather harsh and too subversive. And if *Sophokles* and *Sokrates* are right, why *Æschylus* and *Æneas*, in lieu of *Aischulos* and *Aineias?* Besides, on what ground stop short at a *k*, leaving the vowels to a Latin corruption? The modern Greeks call the author of the Iliad — *Omĕros;* and the victor of Marathon — *Meelteeaâthes;* and it is highly probable that this is far nearer the true pronunciation than are our *Homer* and *Miltiades.* To be consistent, we shall have to talk of *Aias, Odusseus, Purrhos, Lukourgos, Thoukudides, Oidipous, Aischulos,* and *Kirke,* wantonly interrupting the whole Greco-Roman filiation. And, whilst we plunge orthography into a hopeless welter, we shall stray even farther from the true ancient pronunciation. In the result, English literature has rejected the change with an instinctive sense that it would involve us in quicksands; and would to no sufficient purpose break the long tradition which bound Greece with Rome, and both with European literary customs.

Mr. Carlyle would have all true men speak of *Friedrich* and *Otto;* of the *Kurfürst* of *Köln;* of *Trier, Prag, Regensburg,* and *Schlesien.* But then he is quite willing to speak like any common person about *Mahomet* and the *Koran*, of *Clovis* and *Lothar*, of a *Duke* of *Brunswick,* and of *Charles Amadeus of Savoy;* he Anglicises *Marseille, Preussen, Oesterreich,* and *Sachsen;* nay, he actually talks about 'Charlemagne' at 'Aix-la-Chapelle.' Tradition and English literature are in fact too strong for him, except where he wishes to be particularly affectionate or unusually impressive. I venture to think that *Frederick* and *Cologne* are names so deeply embedded in our English speech that there is nothing affectionate or impressive in the effort to uproot them by foreign words which the mass of Englishmen cannot pronounce. It is ridiculous to write, 'The *Kurfürst* of *Köln.*' It should be, '*Der Kurfürst von Köln.*' But, then, we had better write in German at once.

Of all the historical schools, that of the Old English has been the most revolutionary in its methods, and the most exacting in its demands. It began by condemning 'Charlemagne' and the 'Anglo-Saxons'; and now to use either of these familiar old names is to be guilty of something which is almost a vulgarism, if not an impertinence. We have all learned to speak of *Karl* and the *Old English.* One by one, the familiar names of English history, the names that recur in every family, were recast into something grotesque in look and often very hard indeed to pronounce. *Ecgberht*, *Cnut*, or *Knud*, the *Hwiccas*, *Ælfthryth*, *Hrofesceaster*, and *Cant-wara-byryg* had rather a queer look. *Chlotachar*, *Chlodowig*, *Hrotland*, were not pleasing. But when we are asked to give up *Alfred*, *Edward*, and *Edgar*, and to speak of *Ælfred*, *Eadweard*, and *Eadgar*, we began to reflect and to hark back.

Alfred, Edward, and Edgar are names which for a thousand years have filled English homes, and English poetry and prose. To rewrite those names is to break the tradition of history and literature at once. It is no doubt true that the contemporaries of these kings before the conquest did, when writing in the vernacular, spell their names with the double vowels we are now invited to restore. But is that a sufficient reason? We are not talking their dialect, nor do we use their spelling. We write in modern English, not in old English; the places they knew, the titles they held, the words they used, have to be modernised, if we wish to be understood ourselves. We cannot preserve exactly either the sounds they uttered, or the phrases they spoke, or the names of places and offices familiar to them. Why then need we be curious to spell their names as their contemporaries did, when we have altered all else — pronunciation, orthography, titles, and indeed the entire outer form of the language? The precision for which we vainly strive in the spelling of names is after all a makeshift, very imperfectly observed by any one, and entirely neglected by others. And it has the defect of ignoring a long and suggestive unity in history, language, and common civilisation.

It may be true that the contemporaries of 'Edward the Elder,' 'Edward the Martyr,' and 'Edward the Confessor' spelt the name *Eadward*, or *Eadweard*, if they wrote in English; though they did not uniformly do so when they wrote it in Latin. But did the 'Edwards' of Plantagenet so spell their name; or 'Edward' Tudor; and will 'Edward the Seventh' so spell his name? And is *Alfred*, a name to conjure with wherever the English speech is heard, to be severed from the great king? 'Alfred' is a familiar name just as 'king' is a familiar title; and it is as pedantic to insist on archaic forms of the name as it would be to insist on the Saxon form of the office. Since *Edward* was not called by his contemporaries either 'King' or 'The Elder,' what do we gain by such a hybrid phrase as '*King Eadweard the Elder*'?

It is only a half-hearted realism which writes—'*Eadweard* was now King of all England.' It should run:—'*Eadweard* was now *Cyning* of all *Engla-land*.' It is quite correct to write in modern English:—'King Edward marched from London to York.' Here, the proper names are all alike adapted to our vernacular. It is an anachronism, or an anarchaism, to write—'King *Eadweard* marched from London to York.' It ought to run, if we are bent on writing pure old English, '*Eadweard Cyning* marched from *Lundenbyryg* to *Eoforwíc*.' That is the real *couleur locale;* but the general reader could hardly stand many pages of this. It is not true in fact that '*Æthelberht* lived at Canterbury.' He lived at '*Cant-wara-byryg*.' *Ethelbert*, however, may properly be said to have lived at *Canterbury*. For thirteen centuries *Canterbury* and *York* have been famous centres of our English life. Except in a parenthesis, or in a monograph, it would be a nuisance to mention them under the cumbrous disguises of '*Eoforwíc*' and '*Cant-wara-byryg*'; and for precisely the same reason it is a nuisance to read, *Ælfred*, *Ecgberht*, and *Eadweard*.

Where is it going to stop? Ours is an age of archæology, revival, and research; and in no field is research more active than in Biblical and other Oriental history. The grand familiar names, which have had a charm for us from childhood, which have kindled the veneration of a long roll of centuries, are all being 'restored' to satisfy an antiquarian purism. We shall soon be invited to call *Moses*, *Môsheh*, as his contemporaries did. *Judah* should be written *Yehûda;* Jacob will be *Ya'aqôb*. Our old friend *Job* will appear, clothed and in his right mind, as *Iyob*. The prophet *Elijah* is *Eliyahu;* and the prophet *Isaiah* is now metamorphosed into *Yeshayahu*. Imagine how our descendants will have to rewrite the lines:—

> 'O thou my voice inspire,
> Who touch'd *Yeshayahu's* hallow'd lips with fire.'

And the teacher will have to explain to our grandchildren that '*Isaiah*' is an old vulgarism for *Yeshayahu*. 'Jerusalem the Golden' will appear in the children's hymns as *Yerûshalaïm;* and when we speak of the walls of *Jericho* we must sneeze, and say *J'recho*. We must say—the Proverbs of *Shĕlômôh*. But this is not the end of it. The very names in men's prayers and devotions must be reformed. Catholics must learn to say their Aves to '*Mariám*'; and the Protestant must meditate on the 'Blood of *Jehoshua*.'

The historical mind will so have it. It has laid down a rigid canon that proper names should be spelt in the form in which their contemporaries wrote them. And if *Alfred*, a name which for so many centuries has been a watchword to the English race, is to be 'restored' into *Ælfred*, because he and his so spoke it and wrote it; by the same rule must we speak and write of *Jehoshua* of Nazareth, using the same letters in which the Scribes and Pharisees of his day recorded the name in official Hebrew. The historical mind has said it; and English literature, custom, the vernacular speech, poetry, patriotism, and devotion must all give way.

The historical mind has an almost unlimited field; and all the names it records will have to be 'restored' in turn. When *Môsheh* led forth the people of *Yehûda* to the promised *Yerûshalaïm*, he really led them out of *Chemi* or *Kebthor*, not out of 'Egypt,' which is a Greek corruption. And *Pi-Re* and all his host were drowned in the *Yâm-Sûph;* for of course *Red Sea* is a mere translation of a late Hellenic term. About the central Asian monarchies we fortunately have an imperishable and infallible record; for the great king himself inscribed on the eternal rock the names of his ancestors and his contemporaries. It is therefore inexcusable in us if we continue to write the names of Oriental sovereigns in the clumsy corruptions of ignorant Greeks.

All history contains no record more authentic than the sculptured rock of Behistun, whereon the names of the great kings stand graven in characters as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. 'Darius,' we used to write in our ignorant way, 'became King of Persia, Susiana, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, and Egypt.' Not so was it said by them of old time; not Darius, but *Dárayavush;* not king, but *Khsháyathiya.* So, then, the geography lessons of our grandsons will run: — '*Dárayavush* was the *Khsháyathiya* of *Pársa*, of *'Uvaja*, of *Bábirush*, of *Athurá*, of *Arabáya*, of *Mudráya*.' The entire orthography of the Median and Persian Dynasties is now complete and exact. It was not 'Cyrus' who founded the Persian Empire, as we used to be told: it was *Kuraush.* The famous king who perished in the desert was *Kábujiya*, the son of *Kuraush*. And both, beside their own ancestral dominion of *Pársa*, ruled over the mighty world-famous city of *Bábirum*, and the country which lay between the rivers *Tigrám* and *Ufrátauvá*. Oriental history is at last as simple as an infant's A B C.

And we are now able to record the immortal tale of the war between *Hellas* and *Pársa* with some regard for orthographic accuracy. It was *Khshayárshá* who mustered the millions of Asia in the great struggle which ended in the glorious battles of the *Hot Gates* and of *Psyttaleia.* His great generals, *Ariyabhaja* and *Munduniya*, met the Hellenic hoplites only to court defeat; and *Khshayárshá*, the son of *Dáryavush*, at length withdrew from a land which seemed fatal to the entire race of *Hakkámanish*, and sought rest in his luxurious palace of '*Uvaja.* So will run the Hellenic histories of the future, in an orthography not quite so cacophonous and hieroglyphic as many a page in the *Making of England.*

Oriental literature is making vast strides, and the authentic books of the East are daily brought closer and clearer to our firesides. And under the influence of this learning our very children are coming to be familiar with the new dress of the old names. We have grown out of 'Mahomet,' 'Moslem,' 'Koran,' and 'Hegira,' and we are careful to write *Muhammad*, *Muslim*, *Qur'ân*, and *Hejra.* For our old friend *Mahomet* and his *Koran* various professors contend. *Mohammed*, *Muhammad*, *Mahmoud*, and *Mehemet* have had their day; and now they are contending whether *Qur'ân* or *Qorân* best represents the exact cacophony of the native Arabic. And so on through the whole series of famous Oriental names: the *Zend-Avesta*, or *Avesta*, the *Upanishads*, *K'ung Foo-tsze*, *Tsze-Kung*, and *Tsze-Sze*. Scholars, of course, have to tell us all about the *Sukhâvatî-Vyûha* and the *Pra*gñ*â-Pâramitâ-H*ri*ḍaya-Sûtra;* but the question is, if the rising generation will ever be familiarised with these elaborate names.

It may be doubted if, after all, the exact equivalent of these foreign sounds can ever be presented to the English reader by any system of phonetic spelling; all the more when this spelling has to call to its aid an elaborate system of circumflex, diphthong, comma, italic, breathing Sh'va and Dâghesh, most alien to the genius of our language. Can a man, unlearned in the respective tongues, pronounce *K'uṇg-Foo-tsze*, *Kurfürst of Köln*, *Qur'ân*, with any real correctness? And, if he cannot, is it worth while to upset the practice of Europe for centuries, and so vast a concurrence of literature, for the sake of a phonetic orthography which is almost picture-writing in its lavish use of symbols: and all in pursuit of an accuracy which can never be consistently adopted? It may look very learned, but is it common sense?

It so happens that almost all of the Founders of Religions in the East are known to us by certain familiar names, which are obviously not the actual names they bore in their lifetime; but which for centuries have passed current in the literary speech of Europe. *Confucius*, *Mencius*, *Buddha*, *Zoroaster*, *Mahomet*, *Moses*, and *Jesus* are popular adaptations of names which the European languages could not easily assimilate. As such those names are embedded in a thousand works of poetry, history, and criticism, and have gathered round them an imposing mass of interest and tradition. Is it not almost an outrage to discard these old associations and to re-baptize these hoary elders with the newfangled literalism of phonetic pedantry? *K'ung-Foo-tsze*, *Măng-tsze*, *Sâkyamouni*, or *Siddhârtha*, *Zarathustra* or *Zerdusht*, *Muhammad*, *Môsheh*, and *Jehoshua*, may be attempts to imitate the sounds emitted by their contemporaries in Asia, but they are an offence in Europe in the nineteenth century, which has long known these mighty teachers under names that association has hallowed to our ears. If scholarship requires us to sacrifice these old familiar names, the necessity applies to all alike. If we are henceforth to talk of the *Qur'ân* of *Muhammad*, we had better give out the first lesson in church from the *Torath* of the law-giver *Môsheh*.

And, of course, our Roman history will have to be 'restored.' '*Romans*,' '*Etruscans*,' '*Tarquin*,' '*Appius Claudius*,' and the rest are now the *Ramnes*, the *Rasennæ*, *Tarchnaf*, and *Attus Clauzus*. What is to be the final issue of that bottomless pit of Roman embryology, Dr. Mommsen only knows. All that we now behold is a weltering gulf of *Ramnes*, *Tities*, *Sabelli*, *Ras*, *Curites*, where archaic and ethnologic fumes roll upwards incessantly, as from an unfathomable crater. Some day we shall know what was the true, unpronounced, and undivulged name of *Rome;* and what is the true phonetic equivalent of '*Romulus*' and '*Numa*,' of '*Tarquin*' and '*Brutus*.' We are even now in a position to speak with accuracy of the later history. When they come to the Punic wars, our boys and girls in the Board-schools of the twentieth century will learn to say:—'The great contest now begins between the *Ramnes* and the *Chna-ites* of the mighty city of *Kereth-Hadeshoth;* "*An-nee-baal*," the son of "*Am-Melech-Kirjath*," proved himself the greatest general of antiquity; but, when he was overwhelmed in the final defeat of *Naraggara*, the city of Queen *Jedidiah* fell before the irresistible valour of the worshippers of *Diovispater*.' And when the young scholars get down to the *Kym-ry* and the *Gâltachd*, the *Vergo-breiths*, *Verkenn-kedo-righ*, *Or-kedo-righ*, *Cara-dawg*, and *Heer-fürst*, may mercy keep their poor little souls! There are *Gâltachd-ic*, and *Kym-ric*, and *Duitisch* enthusiasts, as well as those of *Wessex* and *Gwent*. I understand there are people even now who want us to call Paris—*Loukh-teith*.

A very large proportion of famous men have been known in history and commemorated in literature under names other than those given to them by their godfathers and their godmothers in their baptism, or those that were entered in the parish register. Under those names we love them, think of them, and feel akin to them. Their names are household words: a part of European literature, and fill us with kindly and filial feelings. These good old names are being steadily supplanted by the alphabetic martinets who recall us to the register with all the formalism of a parish clerk or a Herald from the College. Not *Molière*, but *Poquelin*; not *Voltaire*, but *Arouet*; not *George Sand*, but the *Baroness Dudevant*; not *Madame de Sévigné*, but *Marie de Rabutin-Chantal*. It will soon be a sign of ignorance to speak of *Tom Jones* and *Becky Sharp*. It will be *Thomas Summer, Esq., Junior, J.P.*, and *Mrs. Joseph Sedley*. We shall soon have the *Essays of Viscount St. Albans*, and the *Letters of the Earl of Orford*.

Every reader is familiar with the consummate perfection of the Library of the British Museum, the glory of British, the envy of foreign scholars. And it gives one an awful sense of the growth of this form of purism to watch it invading our noble library. Go to the Catalogue and turn to *Voltaire*, and you will read '*Voltaire*, see *Arouet*;' and you will have to trudge to the other end of the enormous alphabet. Why *Arouet?* What has his legal name to do with a writer who put his name, *Voltaire*, on the title-page of thousands of editions, and never on one, *Arouet?* And *Molière?* — is not *Molière*, as a name, a part of modern literature? Mr. Andrew Lang tells a most delightful story of a printer, who found in his 'copy' some reference to 'the *Scapin* of *Poquelin*.' This hopelessly puzzled him, till a bright idea struck his inventive mind, and he printed it — 'the *Scapin* of *M. Coquelin*.'

Turn, in the Reference Catalogue of the Museum, to *Madame de Sévigné*, and we read: — *Sévigné, Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Marchioness de:* — see *Rabutin-Chantal*.' Why should we 'see' *Rabutin-Chantal?* That was her maiden-name; and since she married at eighteen, and her works are letters to her daughter, it seems a little odd to dub an elderly mamma of rank by her maiden-name. And what in the name of precision is '*Marchioness de*'? It is like saying '*Mister Von Goethe*.' Once attempt a minute heraldic accuracy, and endless confusion results. Why need '*Mrs. Nicholls*' appear in the catalogue of the works of *Currer Bell?* And why need *George Eliot* be entered as *Marian Evans* — a name which the great novelist did not bear either in literature or in private life?

If we apply the baptismal-certificate theory strictly to history, universal confusion will result. Law students will have to study the Digest of *Upravda*. His great general will be *Beli-Tzar*. And by the same rule, the heroic *Saladin* becomes *Salah-ed-deen*, or rather, *Malek-Nasser-Yousouf; Dante* becomes *Durante Alighieri; Copernicus* is *Kopernik;* and *Columbus* becomes *Cristóbal Colon*. If baptismal registers are decisive, we must turn '*Erasmus*' into *Gerhardt Praet;* '*Melancthon*' into *Schwarzerd;* and '*Scaliger*' into *Bordoni*. There is no more reason to change *Alfred* into *Ælfred* and *Frederick* into *Friedrich* than there would be to transform the great sailor into *Cristóbal Colon*, and to talk about the *Code* of *Upravda*.

And the dear old painters, almost every one of whom has a familiar cognomen which has made the tour of the civilised world. What a nuisance it is to read in galleries and catalogues, *Vecellio*, *Vannucci*, and *Cagliari*, in lieu of our old friends *Titian*, *Perugino*, and *Veronese!* *Raphael* and *Michael Angelo*, *Masaccio* and *Tintoretto* are no more: 'restorers' in oil are renewing for us the original brilliancy of their hues; whilst 'restorers' in ink are erasing the friendly old nick-names with *vera copias* of the baptismal certificates in their hands. Every chit of an æsthete will talk to you about the *Cenacolo*, or the *Sposalizio*, of *Sanzio;* and the *Paradiso* in the *Palazzo Ducale;* though these words are nearly the limit of his entire Italian vocabulary. This new polyglott language of historians and artists is becoming, in fact, the speech which is known to the curious as *maccaronic*. It recalls the famous lines of our youth:— *Trumpeter unus erat, coatum qui scarlet habebat.*

There are two fatal impediments to this attempt at reproducing archaic sounds. It is at best but a clumsy symbolism of unpronounceable vocables, and it never is, and never can be, consistently applied. *Æthelthryth*, *Hrofesceaster*, and *Gruffydd* are grotesque agglomerations of letters to represent sounds which are not familiar to English ears or utterable by English lips. The 'Old-English' school *pur sang* do not hesitate to fill whole sentences of what is meant to be modern and popular English with these choking words. Professor Freeman used obsolete letters in an English sentence. Now, I venture to say that English literature requires a work which is intended to take a place in it, to be written in the English language. In mere glossaries, commentaries, and philological treatises, the obsolete letters and obsolete spelling have their place. But in literature, the ð and þ are as completely dead as a Greek Digamma.

The most glaring defect of this 'Neo-Saxonism' is its inconsistency. Human nature would revolt if all the schools were to adopt the same rule; but each separate school contradicts itself in the same page. It is curious that the 'Old-English' school wantonly modernise the spelling of names which happen not to be 'Old-English.' They first mangle the traditions of English literature by twisting household words into an archaic form; and then, in the case of names of the Latin race, they mangle the traditions of English and of foreign literature at once, by twisting other household words into a modern Anglicised form. Mr. Freeman writes in his great history:—'*Ælfred* compared with *Lewis IX*.' Now, here is a double violation of the traditions of English literature; not on the same, but on two contradictory principles. '*Saint Louis*' is as familiar to us as '*Alfred*.' In French and in English, the name has long been written *Louis*, which is certainly the actual French form. But, as *Saint Louis* was only a Frenchman, and not a West-Saxon, his true name is Anglicised into what (in spite of Macaulay) is an obsolete form. And *Alfred*, who is West-Saxon *pur sang*, is promoted or 'translated' into *Ælfred*. If *Lewis* can be shown to be literary English (and there was something to be said for that suggestion in Swift's time) one would not object. But by that rule, *Alfred* must stand; for assuredly that is literary English. One cannot have it both ways, except on the assumption that you intend to spell none but your favourite race with archaic precision.

William the Conqueror, the great subject of Mr. Freeman's great book, was king of England for some twenty-one years and one of the mightiest kings who ever ruled here. In Latin, his contemporaries called him *Willelmus*, *Wilielmus*, or *Wilgelmus;* in French, *Guillaume*, or *Willame;* in English, *Willelm*. We have his charter in

English to this day; which runs—'*Willelm Kyng gret Willelm Bisceop.*' Now, if we are obliged to write *Ælfred*, and *Eadward*, why not write the Conqueror in one of the forms that his contemporaries used? But no; the great founder of the new English monarchy never got over the original sin of being a Frenchman; and so he is modernised like any mere '*Lewis*,' or '*Henry*,' or '*Philip*.'

In the case of English kings, their wives and relations of non-English blood, this school can leave them to the vulgar tongue. It is *William*, *Henry*, *Margaret*, *Matilda*, *Mary*, *Stephen*, and so on. No doubt it would look very odd in an English history to read about our sovereigns '*Stephen* (or *Estienne*) fighting with the *Kaiserinn Mathildis*.' But then, what is the good of all this precision if it is so grossly inconsistent? They who insist on talking of *Elsass* and *Lothringen* write, like the rest of us, *Venice* and *Florence*. And Mr. Freeman, who is quite content with *William* and *Stephen*, mere modern Anglicisms, is very particular how he writes *Sôkratês*. He happens to be fond of West-Saxon annals and Greek philosophers. And so, both are recorded in the aboriginal cacophony.

But there is a far more serious change of name that the 'Old-English' school have introduced; which, if it were indefinitely extended, would wantonly confuse historical literature. I mean the attempt to alter names which are the accepted landmarks of history. It is now thought scholarly to write of the 'Battle of *Senlac*,' instead of the 'Battle of *Hastings*.' As every one knows, the fight took place on the site of Battle Abbey, seven miles from Hastings; as so many great battles, those of *Tours*, *Blenheim*, *Cannæ*, *Châlons*, and the like, have been named from places not the actual spot of the combat. But since, for eight hundred years, the historians of Europe have spoken of the 'Battle of Hastings,' it does seem a little pedantic to re-name it. '*Hastings*' is the only name given to the battle in *Willelm's* Domesday Survey; it is the only name given by the Bayeux Tapestry. '*Exierunt de Hestenga et venerunt ad prelium*' is there written — not a word about *Senlac*. The nameless author of the Continuation of Wace's *Brut* says: —

A Hastinges, sunt encontré
Li rois e li dux par grant fierté.

And Guy, Bishop of Amiens from 1058–1076 A.D., wrote a poem, '*De Hastingæ prælio*.' One would think all this was sufficient authority for us to continue a name recorded in history for eight centuries. So far as I know, there is no positive evidence that *Senlac* was a place at all; the sole authority for 'Battle of *Senlac*' is Orderic, an English monk who left England at the age of nine and lived and wrote in Normandy in the next century. Yet, on the strength of this authority, the 'Old-English' school would erase from English literature one of our most familiar names.

Battles are seldom named with geographical precision. The victors hastily give the first name; and so it passes into current speech. To be accurate, the Battle of *Salamis* should be the Battle of *Psyttaleia;* the Battle of *Cannæ* should be named from the *Aufidus;* and the 'Battle of *Zama*' was really fought at *Naraggara*. Imagine an historian of the future choosing to re-name the Battle of Waterloo from *Hougoumont;* because, in the twentieth century, some French writer should so describe it. The Battle of *Trafalgar* would have to be described as the sea-fight of 'Longitude 6° 7′ 5″ West, and Latitude 36° 10′ 15″ North.' In old days we used to say that 'Charles Martel defeated the Saracens in the battle of Tours.' So wrote Gibbon, Hallam, Milman. Now, we shall have to write — '*Karl the Hammer* defeated the *Ya'arabs* of *Yemen* on the plateau of *Sancta Maura*.' Surely all this is the mint and anise of the annals, neglecting the weightier matters of the law.

Has not the 'Old-English' school made rather too much that *Karl the Great* was not a Gaul; and that 'the Anglo-Saxons' was not the ordinary name of any English tribe? No one is ever likely to make these blunders again; but to taboo these convenient old names from English literature is surely a needless purism. 'Charlemagne' has been spoken of in England ever since, as Wace tells us, Taillefer at Hastings died singing '*De Karlemaine è de Rollant;*' and in an enormous body of literature for a thousand years Charles has been so named. The reason is obvious enough; the great Emperor has become known to us mainly through Latin, French, and Old-French sources, *Chansons de Gestes*, and metrical tales in a Romance dialect. That in itself is an interesting and important fact in literary history. The pure Frank sources, in a Teutonic dialect, are very much fewer and less known. The name 'Charlemagne' is as much a part of the English language as is the title, '*Emperor*,' and it is as little likely to be displaced by any contemporary phonogram as the names of Moses and Jesus. Let Germans talk about *Kaiser Karl:* Englishmen of sense will continue to talk of the 'Emperor Charlemagne:' a name which is used by Gibbon and Milman, by Hallam and Sir H. Maine.

And so, 'Anglo-Saxon' is a very convenient term to describe the vernacular speech used in England before its settlement by the Normans. 'Old-English' is a vague and elastic term. In one sense, the orthography of Dryden or of Milton is Old-English; so is Spenser's, or Chaucer's, or the *Ancren Riwle*. We want a convenient term for the speech of Englishmen, before it was affected by the Conquest. Edward the Elder, the first true King of all England, chose to call himself '*Rex Angul-Saxonum*'; and an immense succession of historians and scholars have used the term Anglo-Saxon. Is not that enough? The most learned authorities for this period have used it: men like Kemble, Bosworth, Thorpe, and Skeat. So too, Bishop Stubbs, in his magnificent work, systematically employs a term which is part of the English language, quite apart from its being current amongst this or that tribe of *Engles* or *West Saxons*. Perhaps, then, we need not be in such a hurry to outlaw a term that was formally adopted for our nation by the first King of all England, and has since been in use in the language.

There is something alien to the true historic spirit in any race jealousy and ethnological partisanship. History is the unbroken evolution of human civilisation; and the true historians are they who can show us the unity and the sequence of the vast and complex drama. Theories of race are of all speculations the most cloudy and the most misleading. And to few nations are they less applicable than to England. Our ethnology, our language, our history are as mixed and complex as any of which records exist. Our nationality is as vigorous and as definite as any in the world; but it is a geographical and a political nationality; and not a tribal or linguistic nationality. To unwind again the intricate strands which have been wrought into our English unity, and to range them in classes is a futile task. If we exaggerate the power of one particular element of the English race, one source of the English people, one side of English institutions, one contributory to the English language, we shall find it a poor equipment for historical judgment.

Race prejudices are at all times anti-historic. Professor Clifford used to talk about morality as an evolution of the 'tribal' conscience. Assuredly confusion is the only possible evolution for a 'tribal' history. The Carlylese school, and the Orientalists, and the *Deutsch* and *Jutish* enthusiasts, bid fair to turn our language and its literature into an ungainly polyglott. Their pages bristle with *Bretwaldas* and *Heretogas*, *Burhs* and *Munds*, *Folk-friths* and *Tungerefas;* or with *Reichs*, *Kurfürsts*, *Pfalzes*, and *Kaisers*. All this is very well in glossaries, but not in literature. How absurd it is to write — 'The *Kurfürst* of *Köln*,' or 'The *Ealdorman* of the *Hwiccas!*' It is as if one wrote — 'The *Duc* of *Broglie* was once *Ministre* of the *Affaires Etrangères';* or that 'Wellington defeated the *Empéreur Napoléon* and all his *Maréchaux':* just as they do in a lady's-maid's high-polite novel. Why are *Deutsch* and *Jutish* titles to be introduced any more than French or Spanish? In glossaries they are useful; but histories of England should be written in English. And it is pleasant to turn to a great book of history, like that of Bishop Stubbs; where, in spite of the temptations and often of the necessities of a specialist dealing with a technical subject, the text is not needlessly deformed with obsolete, grotesque, and foreign words.

A wide range of ethnology and philology shows us that these origins and primitive tongues were themselves the issue of others before them, and are only a phase in the long evolution of history and language. These Engles, and Saxons, and Jutes, these Norse and Welsh, had far distant seats, and far earlier modes of speech. They were no more 'Autochthones' in the forests of Upper Germany than they were in *Wessex* and *Caint*. Their speech has been traced back to Aryan roots current in Asia. And there, by the latest glimmerings of ethnographic science, we lose all these Cymric, and British, and Teutonic tribes in some (not definable) affinity, in some (not ascertainable) district of Central Asia, with some (not recoverable) common tongue of their own. So that these war cries about the White Horse, and Engles, and Jutes, turn out to mean simply that a very industrious school of historians choose to direct their attention to one particular phase of a movement which is in perpetual flux; and which, in time, in place, and in speech, can be traced back to very distant embryos in the infinite night of conjecture.

It is treason to our country and to scientific history to write, as Mr. Greene ventured to do in his fine and elaborate *Making of England*, that 'with the landing of Hengest English history begins.' The history of England is something more than the tribal records of the Engles. The history of England began with the first authentic story of organised communities of men living in this island: and that most certainly existed since Cæsar narrated his own campaigns in Britain. The history of England, or the history of France, is the consecutive record of the political communities of men dwelling in the lands now called England and France. The really great problem for history is the assimilation of race and the co-operation of alien forces. And so, too, the note of true literature lies in a loyal submission to the traditions of our composite tongue, and respect for an instrument which is hallowed by the custom of so many masterpieces. Loyal respect for that glorious speech would teach us to be slow how we desecrate its familiar names with brand-new archaisms; how we ruffle its easy flow with alien cacophonies and solecisms, and deform its familiar topography with hieroglyphic phonograms.

In passing from the literary iconoclasm of the 'Old-English' school I would venture to add that no man is a more humble admirer than I am of the vast learning and the marvellous powers of research belonging to the author of the *Norman Conquest*. Nor can any man more deeply deplore another disaster which our literature has sustained in the premature loss of the author of *A Short History of England:* one who in his brief time has shown such historical imagination and such literary power, that it is impossible to mention him without a pang of regret. *Si, qua fata aspera rumpas, Tu Marcellus eris.*

We may add a few words about various names which under the influence of a most mistaken literalism are being wantonly transformed. Persons who are anxious to appear well informed seem almost ashamed to spell familiar names as their grandfathers did. What is the meaning of '*Vergil*'*?* As every one knows, the best MSS. in the last lines of the fourth Georgic spell *Vergilium;* and accordingly some scholars think fit so to alter the poet's name. Be it so. But '*Vergil*' is not Latin, any more than 'Homer' is Greek. *Virgil* is a familiar word, rooted deep in English literature and thought. To uproot it, and the like of it, would be to turn the English language into a quagmire. We shall be asked next to write '*Omer.*' If all our familiar names are to be recast, as new manuscripts or autographs turn up, none of these venerable names will remain to us. We shall have to talk of the epic poets, *Omeros* and *Durante.* Again, if autographs are conclusive, we shall have to write of *Marie, Quean of Scots,* and *Lady Jane Duddley;* of the statesmen, *Cecyll* and *Walsyngham;* of '*Lord Nelson and Bronte,*' of the great *Marleborough,* of the poet *Noel-Byron,* of *Sir Kenelme Digby, Sir Philip Sidnei,* and *Arbella Seymaure;* of Bloody '*Marye,*' and *Robert Duddley, Earl of Leycester.* All of these queer forms are the actual names signed by these personages in extant autographs. The next step will be to write about these personages in the contemporary style; and archaic orthography will pass from proper names to the entire text.

The objection to insisting on strict contemporary orthography is this: the spelling of the family name was continually changing, and to write it in a dozen ways is to break the tradition of the family. If we call Burleigh '*Cecyll*,' as he wrote it himself, we lose the tradition of the family of the late Prime Minister. If we call the author of the *Arcadia Sidnei*, as he wrote it himself, we detach him from the Sidneys. The Percys, Howards, Harcourts, Douglas, Wyatts, Lindsays, and Montgomerys of our feudal history will appear as the *Perses*, *Hawards*, *Harecourts*, *Dowglas*, *Wiats*, *Lyndesays*, and *Monggomberrys*. If we read *Chevy Chase* in the pure palæography, we shall find how the '*Doughete dogglas*' spoke to the '*lord perse*'; and how there died in the fray, *Wetharryngton*, *ser hewe the monggomberry*, *ser dauy lwdale*, and *ser charls a murre*.

And then how the purists do drag us up and down with their orthographic edicts! Just as the Old-English school is restoring the diphthong on every side, the classical reformers are purging it out like an unclean thing. We need not care much whether we write of *Caesar* or 'Cæsar.' But just as we have learned to write *Caesar* and *Vergil's Aeneid*, in place of our old friends, we are taught to write *Bæda* and *Ælfred*, for 'Bede' and 'Alfred.' The 'Old-English' school revel in diphthongs, even in the Latin names; your classical purist would expire if he were called upon to write 'Cæsar' or 'Pompey.' Farewell to the delightful gossipy style of the last century about 'Tully,' and 'Maro,' and 'Livy'! They knew quite as much about them at heart as we do to-day with all our Medicean manuscripts and our '*sic. Cod. Vat.*'

The way in which it all works into ordinary books is this. The compilers of dictionaries, catalogues, compendiums, vade-mecums, and the like, the writers of newspaper paragraphs and literary announcements, are not only a most industrious, but a most accurate and most alert, race of men. They are ever on the watch for the latest discovery, and the last special work on every conceivable topic. It is not to be expected that they can go very deeply into each matter themselves; but the latest spelling, the last new commentary, or the newest literary 'find,' is eminently the field of their peculiar work. To them, the man who has abolished the 'Battle of Hastings' as a popular error must know more about history than any man living; and so, the man who writes *Shakspere* has apparently the latest lights on the Elizabethan drama. Thus it comes that our ordinary style is rapidly infiltrated with *Karls* and *Ælfreds*, and *Senlacs*, *Qur'âns*, and *Shaksperes;* till it becomes at last almost a kind of pedantry to object.

How foolish is the attempt to re-name Shakespeare himself by the aid of manuscripts! As every one knows, the name of Shakespeare may be found in contemporary documents in almost every possible form of the letters. Some of these are — *Shakespeare*, *Schakespere*, *Schakespeire*, *Shakespeyre*, *Chacsper*, *Shakspere*, *Shakespere*, *Shakespeere*, *Shackspear*, *Shakeseper*, *Shackespeare*, *Saxspere*, *Shackspeere*, *Shaxeper*, *Shaxpere*, *Shaxper*, *Shaxpeer*, *Shaxspere*, *Shakspeare*, *Shakuspeare*, *Shakesper*, *Shaksper*, *Shackspere*, *Shakspyr*, *Shakspear*, *Shakspeyr*, *Shackspeare*, *Shaxkspere*, *Shackspeyr*, *Shaxpeare*, *Shakesphere*, *Sackesper*, *Shackspare*, *Shakspeere*, *Shaxpeare*, *Shakxsper*, *Shaxpere*, *Shakspeyr*, *Shagspur*, and *Shaxberd.* Here are forty of the contemporary modes of spelling his name. Now are the facsimilists prepared to call the great poet of the world by whichever of these, as in a parish election, commands the majority of the written documents? So that, if we have at last to call our immortal bard, *Chacsper*, or *Shaxper*, or *Shagspur*, we must accept it; and in the meantime leave his name as variable as ever his contemporaries did?

Shakespeare no doubt, like most persons in that age, wrote his name in various ways. The extant autographs differ; and the signature which is thought to be *Shakspere*, has been simply misread, and plainly shows another letter. The vast preponderance of evidence establishes that in the *printed literature* of his time his name was written — *Shakespeare.* In his first poems, *Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis*, he placed *Shakespeare* on the title-page. So it stands on the folios of 1623 and 1632. So also it was spelled by his friends in their published works; by Ben Jonson, by Bancroft, Barnefield, Willobie, Freeman, Davies, Meres, and Weever. It is certain that his name was pronounced *Shake-spear* (*i.e.*, as '*Shake*' and '*Spear*' were then pronounced) by his literary friends in London. This is shown by the punning lines of Ben Jonson, by those of Bancroft and others; by Greene's allusion to him as the only *Shake-scene;* and, lastly, by the canting heraldry of the arms granted to his father in 1599:—'In a field of gould upon a bend sables a *speare* of the first: with crest a ffalcon *supporting a speare.*'

It is very probable that this grant of arms, about which Dethick, the Garter-King, was blamed and had to defend himself, practically settled the pronunciation as well as the spelling. It is probable that hitherto the family name had not been so spelt or so pronounced in Warwickshire. It is possible that *Shake-speare* was almost a nick-name, or a familiar stage-name; but, like Erasmus, Melancthon, or Voltaire, he who bore it carried it so into literature. For some centuries downwards, the immense concurrence of writers, English and foreign, has so accepted the name. A great majority of the commentators have adopted the same form: Dyce, Collier, Halliwell-Phillipps, Staunton,

W. G. Clark. No one of the principal editors of the poet writes his name '*Shakspere*.' But so Mr. Furnivall decrees it shall be.

One would have thought so great a preponderance of literary practice need not be disturbed by one or two signatures in manuscript, even if they were perfectly distinct and quite uniform. Yet, such is the march of palæographic purism, that our great poet is in imminent danger of being translated into *Shakspere*, and ultimately *Shaxper*. The Museum Catalogue devotes six volumes to the poet and his editors. All these thousands of works are entered under '*Shakspere*'; though in about 95 per cent. of them the name is not so written. The editions of Dyce, Collier, Staunton, Halliwell-Phillipps, and Clark, which have *Shakespeare* on their title-pages, are lettered in the binding *Shakspere*. Nay, the facsimile of the folio of 1623, where we not only read *Shakespeare* on the title-page, but laudatory verses addressed to '*Shake-speare*' (*sic*) is actually lettered in the binding (facsimile as it purports to be), *Shakspere*. We shall certainly end with '*Shaxper*.'

The claim of the palæographists to re-name great men rests on a confusion of ideas. 'Shakespeare' is a word in the English language, just as 'Tragedy' is; and it is in vain to ask us, in the name of *etymography*, to turn that name into *Shakspere*, as it would be to ask us, in the name of *etymology*, to turn 'Tragedy' into *Goat-song*. The point is not, how did the poet spell his name — that is an antiquarian, not a literary matter, any more than how Homer or Moses spelled their names. Homer and Moses, as we know, could not possibly spell their names: since alphabets were not invented. And, as in a thousand cases, the exact orthography is not possible: the matter which concerns the public is the form of a name which has obtained currency in literature. When once any name has obtained that currency in a fixed and settled literature, it is more than pedantry to disturb it: it is an outrage on our language. And it is a serious hindrance to popular education to be ever unsettling familiar names.

If we are to re-edit Shakespeare's name by strict revival of contemporary forms, we ought to alter the names of his plays as well. There is reason to think that Macbeth was *Mælbæthe*. The twentieth century will go to see *Shaxper's Mælbæthe* performed on the stage. And so they will have to go through the cycle of the immortal plays. Hamlet was variously written *Hamblet*, *Amleth*, *Hamnet*, *Hamle*, and *Hamlett;* and every 'revival' of *Hamlet* will be given in a new name. *Leir's* daughters were properly *Gonorill*, *Ragan*, and *Cordila*. If Shakspere's own orthography is decisive, we must talk about the *Midsummer Night's Dreame*, and *Twelffe-Night*, *Henry Fift*, and *Cleopater*, for so he wrote the titles himself. Under the exasperating revivalism of the palæographic school all things are possible; and, in the next century, it will be the fashion to say that 'the master-creations of Shaxper are undoubtedly Cordila, Hamblet, and Mælbæthe.' Goats and monkeys! can we bear this?

All this revivalism rests upon the delusion, that bits of ancient things can be crammed into the living organism of modern civilisation. Any rational historical culture must be subordinate to organic evolution; lumps of the past are not to be inserted into our ribs, or thrust down our throats like a horse drench. A brick or two from our father's houses will not really testify how they built their homes; and exhuming the skeletons of their buried words may prove but a source of offence to the living. An actor who had undertaken the character of Othello once blacked himself all over the body, in order to enter more fully into the spirit of the part; but it is not recorded that he surpassed either Edmund Kean or Salvini. So we are told that there exists a company of enthusiastic Ann-ists, who meet in the dress of Addison and Pope, in boudoirs which Stella and Vanessa would recognise, and read copies of the old *Spectator*, reprinted in contemporary type.

In days when we are warned that the true feeling for high art is only to be acquired by the wearing of ruffles and velvet breeches, we shall soon be expected, when we go to a lecture on the early Britons, to stain our bodies all over with woad, in order to realise the sensations of our ancient 'forbears'; and no one will pass in English history till he can sputter out all the guttural names in the Saxon Chronicle. Palæography should keep to its place, in commentaries, glossaries, monographs, and the like. In English literature, the literary name of the greatest ruler of the West is *Charlemagne;* the literary name of the most perfect of kings is *Alfred;* and the literary name of the greatest of poets is *Shakespeare.* The entire world, and not England alone, has settled all this for centuries.

THE END.

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